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THE CREATION

AND

THE SCRIPTURE

THE REVELATION OF GOD

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS volume was found, in manuscript, among the unpublished writings of G. E. Monell, M.D., of Omaha, who died suddenly September 29, 1881.

For many years, in accordance with his early education, he gave an unquestioned adherence to the verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testament and to the doctrines of the orthodox churches, considering these essential to a belief in Christianity.

Under the enlightened influence of modern discussion the foundations of his faith were shaken, and he examined the Scriptures diligently to ascertain what truth was. Gradually curtailing his medical practice, he extended his research into the fields of history, science and literature, and we here have the result, in part, of his labors. Instead of drifting into Atheism or Agnosticism, he became, with the exercise of the largest liberty, the firmest of believers in the sufficiency of Christ's life and precepts to give guidance and consolation in this life, and an unshaken hope in the future.

This volume is published as a tribute to the memory of its author, with the hope that it may aid others in solving some of the problems of our existence.

J. J. M.

FISHKILL-ON-HUDSON, April 2, 1882.

THE CREATION AND THE SCRIPTURE.

INTRODUCTORY.

AT a very large meeting of clergy and representative men of various Christian Churches of the North-West, held in Chicago, November 23d, 1876, Mr. Moody was asked, "Why do Evangelists know so little of science?" Mr. Moody replied, "Because they know something better;" and the reply was accepted without further question or explanation.

Another delegate inquired, "Is not the line of truth to be found in preaching the Gospel, instead of preaching about the pretty things in creation—pretty flowers, pretty stars, and so on?" Mr. Moody replied, "You have answered yourself;" and this, too, seemed satisfactory to the entire assembly.

Not one of the two thousand delegates and two hundred ministers of the Gospel there present appeared to remember that the Old Testament had said, "Go to the ant; consider her ways, and be wise," * or that the New Testament, recording the

* Prov. vi. 6.

words of Christ, twice repeated, had said,* "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," that we may understand that even "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these;" and therefore if "God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Not one seemed to remember that the inspired Psalmist had said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth forth His handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."

If this utterance at Chicago had been the first or last of such attempts to belittle accurate study of nature, we might excuse it as an oversight of enthusiasm in a special work.

But this is no anomaly in the history of religion; for there has never been an age in which theology did not arrogate to itself the right to resist science, from Pope Urban who imprisoned Galileo for assuming the stars to be messengers of God, down to the New Jersey Synod and the General Assembly of the United States, which forbade a woman to proclaim the Star of Bethlehem from a Presbyterian pulpit.

* Matt. vi. 28.

It is a common occurrence to see in some religious newspaper or hear from a pulpit remarks alike derogatory to science and scientific men.

Unfortunately, these detractions as to scientific pursuits are called forth because men accustomed to accurate research will not accept a doubtful dogma as an incontrovertible truth, or rely on polemic pretensions as a firm foundation for faith in God.

We see, then, there may be a wide distinction between pulpit theology and Bible truth, which very properly justifies a careful scrutiny.

If the scientist urges, as he may often do, an untenable theory, though based upon real knowledge of nature, it is for the theologian to obtain the same knowledge and prove a better theory, instead of rejecting both theory and fact as alike false.

The same truths of science are common property to all; and surely a teacher of religion, of all others, should not reject the study of scientific truth.

Whatever God has deemed necessary to do, either in creation or providence, should not be considered as beneath the best intelligence of man to understand.

It is the doubtful and often absurd dogmas of ignorant presumption which disgust sensible men and drive them from church relations, and not the simple truth as revealed by God or applied by Christ.

Far be it from me to speak lightly of Mr. Moody,

or of the two or three thousand delegates and clergymen sitting so humbly at his feet that day for instruction; but such questions and such answers, without qualification, are a sneer at the study of God in nature, and Pharisaic also.

Such questions and such answers are sufficient, when passing as they did without explanation or dissent, to justify the conclusion that the representative theologians of the North-West are not friendly to the investigation of scientific truths, and therefore are not fit representatives of the Gospel of Moses or Christ in this matter.

I do not believe Mr. Moody or his collaborators deliberately intended to sneer at science, but such was the tenor of their teaching.

The stars, which we are told fought against Sisera,* were sneered at; the wisdom of Solomon was sneered at; the beautiful teaching of Christ was sneered at; men studying the stars of heaven and their nightly song, or the lilies of the field and their daily lesson, were sneered at.

Perhaps this may be called an extreme case, and charity would so hope; but the sentiment, here so formally stated, is heard quite too frequently from the pulpit in similar expression; it is perfectly in keeping with such ideas of knowledge that the utterers

* Judg. v. 20.

thereof, though clergymen and supposed to be professionally graduated in hermeneutics and pastoral theology, should seek their final philosophy from an uneducated layman.

Questions such as these quoted, and answers such as those given, and embodied in exercises intended to teach just how to preach the Gospel of Christ, subject religion to an *odium theologicum* that should rest on the theologians alone, and not upon religion.

The errors of opinionated ignorance, whether from the pulpit or the pew, should not injure the deeper truths upon which those errors are unhappily founded.

Religion is almost necessarily judged by its authorized expounders, and therefore errors of teaching are more dangerous than private opinions.

No teacher of religion can afford to sneer at science. Without science there would be only a theology of ignorance, which all past experience has proved to be both bigoted and persecuting. However little the teacher may know, he owes that little to the studies of his predecessors.

A true religion may survive after a fashion, even in ignorance; but if it would grow and develop, as nations grow and develop, it must keep step with every advance in knowledge.

The science of language is, to-day, one of the strongholds of religion, and every branch of science

and art are outworks that religion cannot afford to lose or undervalue.

If religion is to cover the earth and convert the people, it will be done by harmonizing every element of influence and encouraging inquiry in every field of knowledge.

If we would save sinners, we must not sneer at Gamaliel or scorn the publican, but imitate Christ by teaching the one and lifting up the other.

Mr. Moody, and Mr. Sankey, his co-worker, showed by their own operations that though apparently absorbed in the spiritual element of their work, they did not undervalue the wisdom of men or the ways of men in order to insure success in their meetings and gain access to the hearts of men. Nor did they despise a liberal use of proper machinery to co-ordinate every department of their work so as to secure a proper hearing and a final success.

The great meetings of Moody and Sankey were worked up precisely as great meetings of a worldly nature are worked up—by expending money and arousing a preliminary interest.

In the meetings of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago large sums of money were used for this purpose in various ways. Some fifty thousand dollars was a preliminary condition for the erection of a suitable building, subsidizing newspapers, and procuring necessary notoriety. Clergymen, elders,

and delegates, from far and near, were enlisted, and persuaded to co-operate openly. An usher-in-chief was employed to train subordinate ushers, so that all should be done decently and in order. Teachers were selected and trained for Bible and class meetings, that all might receive a word in due season.

Visitors were sent out to call in hearers from the wayside and the mansion.

More than all, as a powerful attraction, from five hundred to a thousand singers were drilled to act in concert or in bands, to catch the ear with melody.

This was all done, and well done: Barnum could not have done it better; and it was wisely done to accomplish the desired end.

But this also illustrates that religion, to be a success, must be so adapted to our nature as to utilize every function of the body and every faculty of the brain; and it also illustrates the folly of a merely spiritual Christianity undervaluing the everyday items and interests of the world at large.

Religion is a necessary element of human nature, and as such has influenced the life and controlled the destiny of every nation whose life and destiny are known to us. This religion is evinced in its standards for human conduct in all the relations of social life, and thus necessarily influences its history, and sooner or later controls its destiny.

The spirit of man is so inseparably connected with

the Spirit of Deity, that the lower spirit must recognize the higher in some practical way expressing dependence and obedience.

Mere opinion is not sufficient; but the opinion or belief as to Deity must have an intelligent development in life, and tend to righteousness, or it ceases to be an intelligent religion.

The lowest fetichism and the most fully developed Christianity are alike in this, that they acknowledge and worship a Being superior to man.

The forms, ceremonies, and creeds by which this belief in a superior or Divine Being is manifested are matters of instruction and development, and every religious development which is superior to paganism is obtained by instructing and developing the intellect.

If this instruction is in the line of God's laws, as revealed in His ways and in His works, then religion will develop in like manner; and any advance in religion must be associated with a corresponding advance in social and political science, or it cannot be permanent.

So also, on the other hand, any advance in social or political science must be accompanied by a like advance in religious sentiment, or degeneration would soon destroy national strength and intelligence.

God is the common centre of all things, and must

be worshipped as a Unity, by complete union of both the spirit and intellect.

If, having God's word, we refuse to study His ways as seen in the world about us, or as may be recorded in history ; or if we refuse to study His works as recorded by scientific men—we soon begin to apply God's word to establish our own ways : then, neglecting all revelation by law, we gradually over-estimate our own emotions and undervalue the real inspiration of truth.

This dogma takes the place of religion, and an opinionated system of belief crowds out the simpler truths of God.

The laws of God as revealed by science, though adapted to every phase of advancing civilization, are unchanging, and lessons derived from them are equally unchanging, and should control and guide our devotions as well as our individual relations to each other.

When we fully realize the goodness of God in feeding the sparrow, we love the sparrow better, as well as God.

When we understand the structure of the lily, we behold how, though it toils not, it is arrayed in more beauty than Solomon, and we have advanced in religion as well as science.

Whatever God has seen fit to do, is useful for us to know ; and whatever law of God is revealed in

nature is a proper guide to well-being or well-doing in life.

If the body is the earthly tenement of an immortal soul, any knowledge necessary for the well-being of our human nature is also necessary for the well-being of the soul, here and hereafter.

It is impossible that there should be any conflict between science and religion in this direction.

The conflict between men who profess to teach science, and men who profess to teach religion, is a conflict of men and not a conflict of revealed truths; it is a conflict between factions of men, and not between God's word as revealed in scripture and His works as revealed in nature.

Science conflicts with nothing but ignorance; and it is only when men go beyond the province of fact and seek to expound the reasons thereof, that they are liable to differ, or become dogmatic and unreasonable.

True science cannot oppose true religion, for a truth of God as revealed in nature cannot be opposed to, or in conflict with, any other truth. Whenever men, therefore, assert the authority of mere human writings as superior to laws revealed in nature, they are affirming a human standard of truth as superior to the Divine.

When a theologian sneers at science because the theological opinions of scientific men are adverse to

his, or even because the facts of science are unfairly used, he manifests both lack of science and lack of truth.

On the other hand, if a scientific man sneers at religion because of pedantic dogmatism in the pulpit, he also manifests a lack of religious knowledge and scientific precision as well as a lack of charity.

Theology without sufficient knowledge, and science without sufficient religion, retard the progress and obstruct the influence of both science and religion, by contending about men's theories of God's mysteries, instead of recognizing and agreeing upon the truths of God's revelation in religion or science.

Religion is right feeling toward God, rightly apprehended: science is the knowledge of God as revealed in well-established facts in His works.

The right feeling toward God must be largely influenced by the right understanding of God's ways and works; for it is impossible to apprehend God intelligently without some knowledge of Him as revealed to us, outside of ourselves.

Nor is it possible to apprehend God honestly, unless we utilize every accessible means of knowledge.

Therefore, if science is a knowledge of God's works, including ourselves, religion is the right application of that knowledge, so that we shall co-operate best with God's plans, both outside of and within ourselves.

Our own inferences and opinions are valueless and deceptive, except as founded upon facts beyond our control but within our knowledge.

It would be utterly impossible to conceive a reliable idea of light as utilized by the eye if we could not see, or of sound as applied to the ear if we could not hear.

In like manner, every material fact is exterior to and independent of the brain, but the brain is so constructed as to utilize an impression of these facts and preserve them as knowledge.

The laws of nature are but the designs of God worked out permanently before us, but are often revealed to us only so far as we study and learn them.

If we study them carelessly or interpret them ignorantly, the facts and laws themselves remain for re-examination, the witness always remaining for cross-question and correction.

Intelligence is given to us by God that we may study and discern these truths of creation on a scientific basis, just as much as it was given to Adam to give suitable and expressive names to the first animal creation.

If Adam before the fall was an expert zoologist, it is hardly becoming us, of a fallen race, to treat lightly his accomplishments, especially if we advocate the literal reading of Genesis.

It would be just as reasonable to discard the eye or the ear from common life, as the use of our intelligence for this life or that which is to come.

Facts, material truths, the laws of God in nature, are God's revealed word to man, and when once known, no matter how revealed, become sacred scriptures.

These scriptures, however, after all the care that may be bestowed upon them, are but a human conception of a Divine truth, and expressed in fallible and changing language, though the truth itself may be infallible and unchanging.

The facts, however, remaining permanent may be re-studied from age to age, until accumulated observation corrects all correctible errors of belief, expression, or application.

Thus for ages men failed to understand fully the movements of the heavenly bodies, and a proper knowledge thereof was retarded for centuries, because a false reverence for the written word forbade scientific investigation of a statement supposed to be affirmed in the Bible.

According to the theology of the day, the Bible asserted that the sun rose and set; therefore it was heresy, punishable with death, for any one to affirm that the earth revolved around the sun.

The whole Christian Church of that period united in burning the books which advocated the helio-

centric theory, and also united in burning men for writing the books.

The mere human verbiage, describing an optimal phenomenon, was more sacred to the Church than a real knowledge of the laws of God.

The persecution and the fire failed to silence the heavenly witness, which still speaks to us with Divine authority; and in these days a man who denies the laws of Galileo, Bruno, and Copernicus would be deemed well-nigh an idiot, although the same Bible reads and teaches the same now as then.

We thus see, in many respects, even as to vital interests, that the most sacred records are subject to all the errors of human instrumentality in obtaining and recording facts; much more are such records liable to error when they contain mere human opinions as to the interpretation and application of the facts,

We see this by comparing any sacred record whether of Jew or Gentile, with itself; we thus find that what is written as inspired in one age is regarded quite differently by the same authority in a subsequent age.

The Jewish scriptures are perhaps better guarded against error than any other, but we find this plain throughout.

What is declared to be directed by God in one age is reversed in another; thus divorce was allowed by Moses, but forbidden by Christ.

It would be easy to multiply instances where there is a marked antagonism between the recorded theology of the sacred writers from Moses to Malachi and from Matthew to Revelations.

As God changes not, the only reverent conclusion is, that the record contains the errors as well as the inspiration of fallible men.

The record may be honest and according to the faith of the writer, but subsequent study must be allowed to correct any possible error of human detail, or sacred scriptures will cease to be a reliable repository of Divine truth.

With the understanding that supposed truths of any kind, whether primarily revealed by the word of man, or the works of God in nature, are always to be the subjects of reverential study for correction or confirmation ; (for, as human intelligence develops, truths once difficult to understand become easy of comprehension ;) the final record of sacred scriptures will always be an advance toward fundamental truth, and better ideas of God.

The revelation of this record will thus correspond ultimately to the revelation of God's laws, and men must believe whether they will or not.

On the other hand, if the record of sacred scriptures is held to be a plenary inspiration, every error of record, of copying, of translating or printing must stand ; and these as well as the superstitious opinions

of an age of barbarism and ignorance must remain the Divine standard of all future ages.

This doctrine was distinctly repudiated by Christ when he reversed the law of divorce as enforced by Moses,* on the ground that Moses did this because of the hardness of men's hearts, but "from the beginning it was not so."† What Moses directed as an inspiration of God for the guidance of His chosen people, was declared by Christ, fifteen hundred years after, to be a violation of the seventh commandment, and is so declared now by all Christian nations.

The real basis of science is an admitted ignorance and the necessity of study to enlighten that ignorance; and this is surely a safer basis for a true conception and proper views of Deity than a theology founded upon a supposed perfection of human knowledge and a consequent tendency to be self-satisfied without study or question.

Everything in God's way of working in material things is progressive, and the way of His working with our intellect also progressive, unless we counteract it by self-righteousness or wilful ignorance.

All study of science is based upon the idea that we can learn more; but nearly all dogmas of a

* Deut. xxiv. 1, 2.

† Matthew v. 32, 38, 39; xix. 8.

spiritual kind are based upon the spiritual idea of perfect knowledge—at least so far as the dogma is concerned.

The Jews were an apt illustration of this at the birth of Christ: they believed their religion as given by Moses and the prophets would accomplish, by their agency and their dogmas, all that religion could accomplish.

It was run in ruts and grooves of human conception, but held to be perfect in action, and sufficient, without further development, for all future contingencies.

The Saviour they expected was but a climax to complete their national grandeur, and a hero to establish by conquest the Jewish rule and the Jewish religion over the whole earth.

No wonder they assailed Christ with abuse as a heretic when he sought to teach them a purer faith and salvation by God's grace, instead of by broad phylacteries and long prayer.

Any theological creed, therefore, formulated by human device is not necessarily religion, nor are we bound to accept it as a standard of faith or rule of life, unless it expresses our intelligent belief.

So also a mere scientific theory of human device is not science, and is not to be urged as such in determining matters of religion.

A religious faith, as Paul taught,* should be founded upon something we know.

If we know but little, our faith will be limited and simple ; if we know more, our religion and our responsibilities will be of a higher grade ; but however much we may learn, we can never harm religion by learning all there is to be known of truth.

A religion that involves our eternal existence should not be determined by doubtful speculations, or tabooed as too sacred for further investigation.

The religion of an enlightened age is not limited to the utterance of a darkened oracle in the holy of holies, behind the veil of ceremonials and inaccessible to all but a chosen high-priest ; but must include the Shekinah of the rent veil accessible to both Jew and Gentile.

Whenever a theology renders the knowledge or service of God more difficult than it is made by Christ, that theology acts as a veil to hide God's presence, and uses its creed to hinder rather than help His service.

The ordinances of worship are calculated to be helps, not hindrances, to a better life ; and therefore they are offered to the sinner at the first step of his religious experience to strengthen him, rather than

* Romans i, xx.

at the close of life as a deathbed sacrament to exorcise the devil.

It was this fetich regard for baptism which impelled Constantine to refuse that ordinance until lying on his deathbed, and, as he supposed, beyond the power of new temptation and sin.

Such a theology is no better than idolatry.

Churches may properly be organized for various Christian purposes, but this does not and cannot constitute them custodians of God's heritage or arbiters of religious knowledge.

One church may excel another in devotion, or spirituality, as it is called ; but this gives it no authority to think or decide for another.

Men organized as a church may show more religion than the unorganized masses outside of such bodies, but this gives the church no authority to adopt a Shibboleth of membership and forbid all access to Christ except by its use as a password.

Experience has fully established the fact that a theology claiming to be orthodox may be ignorant, arrogant, and cruel, and yet defend itself by a plea of spiritual infallibility as entitled to control man's intellectual nature.

A spiritual dogma to be respected must admit free inquiry, and avail itself of every attainable knowledge of material as well as spiritual things.

It is permanent facts and established truths only

which constitute essential elements of religious belief ; yet a formulation of such truths, if properly used, may be very valuable and profitable in the organization and government of churches.

It is, therefore, necessary to bear constantly in mind that a theology founded on creeds and catechisms, limiting further inquiry, is not necessarily a religion founded on unquestionable truths any more than speculations or theories of science are scientific facts.

If religion is right feeling toward God as rightly appreciated, then science is the right appreciation of facts in God's creation and providence ; and thus knowledge is the basis of an appreciation that is to produce, or rather justify, a right feeling ; and it is thus, by a knowledge of things that are, we have a justifying faith in things that are not.

Let it therefore be clearly understood in this discussion, that theology is not used as synonymous with religion, nor speculative theory as science.

Theology is simply a *logos*, a word, not a law, about God ; so also theories in science are simply discussions about science.

Theology may be right religion, or it may be wrong ; speculations in science may be right or they may be wrong.

The theology of the Inquisition was wrong cen-

turies ago, and the theology of excommunication is wrong now.

The theology of ignorance was wrong then and is wrong now.

The theology of individual liberty in Christ was right then and is right now.

These facts do not imply that theologies or creeds are unprofitable in religion, or speculative theories unprofitable in science, but that in religion as well as science it is our duty to examine for ourselves and "hold fast to that which is good:" a duty which can only be performed by intelligent study, for, after all, it is only by man's intelligence that God is revealed, or according to the celebrated saying of St. Chrysostom in regard to the Shekinah, or the ark of the testimony, "the true Shekinah is man."

Leibnitz at first rejected the law of gravitation, because it seemed to him to be derogatory to God's freedom of action; Newton, on the contrary, believed it one of the most perfect possible demonstrations of Deity.

Had Newton refused investigation on the same ground as Leibnitz, the world would have waited a long time in ignorance of one of the most perfect and beautiful developments ever known in religion or science.

Fortunate it was for religion as well as science that Leibnitz and Newton lived where theologies

could not arrest the study of Christian truth as revealed in science, by a scientific man, without a theological license to declare "ex cathedra" the limit of inspired truth.

If the teacher of religion would work in his high calling with the conscientious study and beautiful simplicity of Newton, and investigate truth everywhere with that faith and trust in God which accepts all His works as very good, he would soon be relieved from that embarrassment which results from defending creeds and catechisms as infallible interpreters of the religion he professes.

The vote of a Protestant council is no more authority as a question of principle than the vote of a Roman Catholic council or a Jewish Sanhedrim.

The religion that guides us must result from the best use of our best faculties of body and mind in every department of creation.

We see God's universal and impartial love in the sun shining upon the good and the bad, and the witness of His unvarying kindness in the rain falling alike upon the just and the unjust ; but if we would see more of God in these evidences than the heathen do, we must study them more and learn more of the universal law by which God as the author of goodness is revealed.

We look upon the heavens, and even the unaided eye can see wonderful mysteries ; even the child can

say, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star;" but if we would know more than the child, how God in wisdom made the stars, we must not be satisfied with gazing, but learn somewhat of the mystery as revealed to research and somewhat of the twinkle as seen by science: then we can join with meaning and without mockery in that anthem of the heavenly host forever singing as they shine, "The hand that made us is Divine."

Let us then bear in mind the difference between theology and religion, nor lose our love for the Divine essence because of coarse and repulsive covering.

It was theology, not religion, commenced and continued the long line of Christian persecution from the time of Constantine to the last fulmination of a Protestant Assembly.

Alas! it was too often true that mere dogma incited the martyr to suffer, as well as the persecutor to inflict the suffering; and thus the religion of love is made a background of offence both to the oppressor and the oppressed.

This is worse than paganism in one way; for the pagan made the temple of God and the altar a refuge from the avenger, whereas Christians make the temple and the altar a hunting-ground for heresy.

This continued persecution for opinion's sake, this conflict of catechisms and councils, this putting

up an infallible standard in one generation to be pulled down by its own children in the next, not only proves that councils are not inspired to determine creeds, but that neither councils nor churches should control the acquisition of knowledge.

The foundation rock of religion must ever be freedom of individual opinion and the right to individual growth in knowledge and grace. Any church or creed interfering with this right cannot be of God.

I know of no instance in the history of mankind where science has persecuted either ignorance or religion; but over fifty millions of human beings, slaughtered by the professed Church of Christ for opinion's sake, are victims of persecution along all the centuries for sixteen hundred years. Excommunication for heresy is rampant even yet.

Laws of advancing civilization no longer allow the Church to forbid young love its marriage rite, the young babe its maternal care, or the dead body its burial, as a punishment for heresy.

It is not uncharitable to affirm that when an ordained minister of the Gospel, standing before the people, claiming to be called God's messenger, becomes a common huckster of slang about scientific pursuits and a retailer of malicious gossip about scientific men because they are unbelievers in his creed, that he would also burn their bodies if the law of the land would allow it to be done.

It is not an unusual thing to hear scientific men abused as atheists by professed teachers of religion who have not studied the works they condemn, or else they are guilty of gross falsehood in misrepresenting them.

The hearts of men are the same now as when, eighteen hundred years ago, James and John would call down fire on a village of Samaria because the inhabitants refused to receive Christ,* and Paul would have the coppersmith rewarded according to the evil he had done.†

These things, as before stated, are not chargeable to religion, but theology.

Christ rebuked James and John, and would undoubtedly have rebuked Paul for intolerance had he been present.

For a thousand years, during which the Church had control of life, learning, liberty, and conscience, it was a hotbed of shameful ignorance and brutal persecution, without, after all, securing unity of faith or peace and harmony within its own borders.

For a thousand years—yea, until now, councils and assemblies exercising the Divine prerogative of judgment on the Christianity of men are nevertheless opposed to each other in judgment, without either consistency or charity.

* Luke ix. 54.

† 2. Timothy iv. 14.

CHAPTER I.

UNWRITTEN DIVINE LAWS.

THEOLOGY too often acts as if science originated with man, and the assertion of physical facts were but assumptions of his own brain; whereas a physical fact, though but recently brought to man's comprehension, is in some way the result of laws operating through all time.

The law of gravitation, discovered and applied by Newton, was not a law of Newton to cease its operation when he died or to be perverted by his errors of judgment or imperfect understanding; but was a law of God for all time, unchangeable in its relations, and to be applied with assured faith by man in every condition of life.

Engineering, architecture, navigation, and almost every mechanic art soon became subordinate to this law and the certainty and uniformity of its action.

On the other hand, the emission theory of light advocated by Newton was as universally accepted two hundred years ago as the theory of gravitation, and is now universally rejected.

Time and re-examination, with increased knowledge of natural laws, have confirmed the theory of

gravitation as Divine and rejected the emission theory of light as human.

Light is clearly emitted and is a fact, now as then; but the law of its action is now correctly learned.

The law of expansion and condensation of steam was a law of God long before it was understood and utilized by Watt and others in navigation, or by Stephenson and others in railroads and mechanic arts.

The old-time song of the tea-kettle by the fireside, when understood by the human mind and formulated in language, has changed the commerce of nations, strengthened the structure of society, developed the powers and genius of men, and improved the spiritual relations of the entire race. Thus the law of gravitation and the law of steam became inspired and revealed truth of God for the guidance of men.

The confidence and trust we have in these laws and the record of their operations are not founded simply on the written word or authority of those who discovered and recorded them, but upon a condition of things; which condition is just as open to investigation now as then, and will be for all time.

The Divine authority of a law of God, thus known and recorded, thus tested and applied, transcends, as a mere matter of credence, the authority of a

recorded miracle long since performed, or a mere verbal utterance as long since revealed.

The miracle and the utterance depend entirely on the authority and accuracy of the record, the facts being entirely beyond a reinvestigation; whereas the laws of nature and the facts of science are ever open to question and answer: a process which consigns bigotry, superstition, witchcraft, demoniac possession, spiritual communication, spiritual materialization, and all dogmas of mere belief and emotion, to the realms of the unknown or untrue, but enshrines the scriptures of law as holy oracle and unavoidable will of God.

The same is true of magnetism, electricity, heat, and all other forces of nature, now so thoroughly identified with our daily life that we too often cease to realize our dependence upon them or our obligations to study and obey them.

A knowledge of these forces in the material world and the laws by which they act has taught, and still by daily warning teaches us, that a long list of accidents and widespread disease are not special visitations of God for sin, but a necessary penalty for ignorance, carelessness, or presumption.

The collision at sea, the foundering on a rock, the exploded boiler, when causing death, are violations of the sixth commandment.

The barometer, the chronometer, the compass, the

steam-gauge, instruments for determining latitude and longitude, etc., are religious truths, speaking the language of inspiration; and a failure to know their use or a failure to use them is a worse sin than ignorance of creeds or heresy in theological dogma.

It is the broken rail, the misplaced switch, the rotten bridge, the weakened or oversteamed boiler, and the neglected compass that send unfortunate travellers to destruction, and not a special judgment of God; for the accident involves both the righteous and the wicked, the just and the unjust, and occurs alike on week-day or Sunday.

When the uninformed or reckless miner rashly or ignorantly opens his safety-lamp in the foul air of the mine, it is the explosion of carburetted hydrogen, and not the avenging angel of the Lord, which produces the awful results.

It was the certain operation of a general law of which he was or might have been well informed, and not a special judgment from which he had no way of escape.

God never plans the affliction of His people, nor does He hasten the death of the wicked by special agencies beyond their knowledge and control.

The young man was not born blind for his own sin or the sin of his parents,* and the tower of Siloam,†

* John ix. 3.

† Luke xii. 4.

as well as the rain * falls alike upon the just and the unjust.

God does not exempt His professed followers from the effects of violated law, nor does He violate His own laws to work out mysterious or special results for their benefit.

The epidemic which decimates an encamped army is not a destroying angel of war sent to fight an enemy, but a necessary consequence of filth, dissipation, and exposure of camp life, for which the proper remedy is not formal prayers or pharisaic fasting, but the Sanitary Commission and the Sisters of Mercy.

“The pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday” in city and country, desolating the hearts and homes of humanity, is the result of violated laws of life, and must be remedied by sanitary regulations.

Slow disease is constantly produced and developed by idleness, indulgence, intemperance, fashion, and bad habits of life and broken laws of health, even with professing Christians who are perfectly satisfied with their church professions, and so-called Christian experiences, higher life, and orthodox belief, as sufficient testimonials of a correct conscience and a true faith.

* Matthew v. 45.

The curse of fashion, filth, and self-indulgence is not to be removed by groanings of the spirit or penitential enchantments, or prevented except by penitential reform.

The scavenger, with spade, broom, and water, must cleanse the streets, the alleys, and the houses; aye, and if need be, the people also until Christianity can boast at least the human virtue of cleanliness.

Idleness must yield to industry. Indulgence must yield to temperance, and a right life must accompany religious creeds.

Let humanity, whether heretic or orthodox, understand that every excess, whether in eating or drinking, every hot-bed of dirt about our persons or our homes, every dissipation of mind or body, are mortgages on our natural life, to run with compound interest until foreclosed by death, in spite of future fasting and prayer.

The joy of believing can never cancel the consequences of sinning, nor any hope for the life to come counteract the penalty of violated law in the present life.

It is safe to affirm that the science of medicine, by revealing God's law as to pure air and cleanliness alone, has materially modified the fatality of those terrible epidemics which once desolated the cities of Christian nations, and still scourge cities where they fail to enforce sanitary rules.

In 1348 the black plague carried off eighty thousand persons at Avignon in a few months. One of these victims was Laura De Sade, immortalized by Petrarch.*

Before the introduction of vaccination in Europe, five hundred thousand persons perished of small-pox in a single year; yet when science found a preventive, theology denounced it as interfering with the will of God.

In 1611 pestilence destroyed two hundred thousand persons in Constantinople; in 1625, thirty-six thousand in London; in 1632, sixty thousand at Lyons; in 1656, four hundred thousand at Naples; in 1720, sixty thousand at Marseilles; in 1773, eighty thousand at Bassora, in Persia. In 1799 three thousand persons died daily in Barbary for a time, and two hundred and forty-seven thousand perished in Fez.

These are but items of modern times, and are exceeded by the like destruction in earlier ages, when even less was known as to the laws of life and health.

The fearful famines in Asia, which so often end in disease and death, arise almost entirely from a neglect of well-known laws of agriculture and meteorology.

* "History of Our Times," p. 93. J. McCarthy.

It is estimated that sixty millions—more than the entire population of the United States of America—perished in the famine recently prevailing in Northern China, and this not only because entire regions neglected proper irrigation, but because they raised only opium,* and trusted for grain to other provinces, now also parched.

Sufficient reservoirs of water and suitable irrigation during drought is the rational remedy for a rainless famine in the East, and one such system of English supply in India is worth all the Buddhist prayer-mills in the land. In like manner let Christian cities neglect a supply of good water to every family, and allow the sewerage of every house to swelter and ferment in every door-yard and filtrate into every well, and pestilence will spread its death pall over such cities and houses as surely as in pagan lands, in spite of the fasting and formal prayers of pious men—if men *can* be pious without being clean.

But we need not quote the pestilence which broods in the poisoned air of crowded cities, and finding oftentimes victims in honest poverty as well as in

* The British Government produced opium as a monopoly in India, and sold it at public sale in Calcutta, thus stimulating the trade to increase the revenue, and took eight hundred millions of dollars from China for this drug during the last century.

dirt and dissipation ; we need not quote the famine of rainless regions where ignorance suffers alike with neglect ; we need not quote the catastrophe by land or sea which hurls confiding travellers from life to sudden death without warning, to prove that the ways of God are not special or mysterious in these matters, but are so plain “ that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.”

If the innocent and ignorant perish by these providences of God, it is because they ignorantly or otherwise subject themselves to the same influences which destroy the careless or sinful, and not because of a special providence.

When Pompeii was rebuilt on the lava foundation of a previous eruption, ten righteous men within its walls would not have saved it, nor would ten thousand wicked ones have increased its danger from a subsequent outburst of the volcano.

The law of burning lava is inexorable, and the goodness of God in all of these cases is not in special providence, but in allowing us to understand these inexorable laws of His creation and providence, and to use them as ministers of mercy.

Steam governed by law is the angel of industry and progress, but used recklessly or ignorantly is a demon of destruction.

The alcohol of commerce, in the various forms, entering into a thousand useful arts and industries,

is deliberately perverted and patronized for the production of disease and death, by thousands who sneer at the science which forbids its use as a beverage, and whose souls rest in peace on some church creed, in contented ignorance or wilful bigotry.

The sixty thousand graves filled annually in the United States alone by victims of intemperance are not all from the huts and hovels of the degraded and destitute, whose hard lot of privation and penury compels them to live in a miasm they cannot avoid, and incur disease from which they cannot escape; but these victims of intemperance come largely from mansions of wealth, where men live in ease and affluence and enter into temptations and progress to ruin from choice.

The bleared eye and bloated body of the wealthy inebriate going down cheerily to a drunkard's doom, are the slow but sure witnesses of broken laws, blasting a life which might be beautiful and useful; they are witnesses, as surely as the sunken eye and famished frame of the friendless sot who dies starving in his debauchery.

Wealth nor friends can avert, resources of nature cannot resist, remedies of medicine cannot rescue, body or brain that persists in the use of intoxicating drinks.

Dives luxuriating in his palace, and Lazarus suffer-

ing at his gate, are in this, as at the day of judgment, on equal footing.

The broken law exacts the penalty, and there is no vicarious atonement in this life, whatever a trusting faith may hope for in a life to come.

Step by step, nature kindly warns the victim of danger incurred, and thus entreats him to pause ere it be too late.

The sickness of an occasional debauch is followed by disordered digestion, until disease as well as drinking becomes a habit: "The horse-leech still cries, Give! give!" until both mind and body suffer fiery torments, which Revelations affirm are but a prelude to that flame which even eternity cannot quench.

Sixty thousand victims to intemperance each year is the actual count in this land of Christian privilege alone.

Add to this the victims of strong drink and opium elsewhere, and who can count the final footing up of this awful harvest of voluntary woe?

Add to these the suffering, the disease, the despair of friends, the children inheriting a craving appetite or incipient disease, and even imagination fails to conceive the sorrow and crime that follows the violation of this one law of life.

If theology taught more the scientific certainty of these results, it would add greatly to the influence of

a teaching which refers only to the uncertainty of a life to come.

The logic of science and religion is the same, and cause and effect follow with the same inevitable sequence, in the moral and spiritual as in the material world.

CHAPTER II.

INFLUENCE OF THE PAST.

SUCH and a multitude of similar facts teach us, that the unwritten laws of God, which science seeks to reveal, are woven into the web and woof of our daily life and future destiny, although long unrecorded, and all knowledge of their first discovery and gradual application forgotten.

Phœnicia and her dependent colonies passed away centuries ago, but the alphabet we inherit from her literature prints our Bible, and the ships we inherit from her commerce carry it to evangelize the world.

Greece is a memory of the past, but the science of her philosophy, of her beauty, and her art, which gave her glory and grandeur, remains our inheritance. The language of her schools furnished the Bible for centuries to Africa and Asia, and Jesus and his disciples quoted from it as authority for the New Dispensation.

It was the language in which the Gospel of Jesus was written and in which Paul addressed the men of Athens and wrote to the churches of Asia.

It is the scientific study of Greek manuscripts

which is age by age giving to us the corrected teaching of the entire apostolic and patristic church.

Yet theologians still tell us "they know something better!"

The "common law" of human rights and liberties, recorded in India and Egypt, but revised in early Rome, is to-day the "common law" of the civilized world, though Egypt, India, and Rome have relapsed into paganism, or paganism half-Christianized.

It was the study of literature, philosophy, and science by early followers of Mahomet, more than the learning or the desire of the then dominant Church of Rome, that developed the intellect of man for a thousand years, until a great reform in Europe became possible.

Then intelligence, instead of bigotry and brute force, became the right arm of religion, and heresy ceased to peril life; then twisting of joints, crushing of feet in iron boots, starvation in filthy dungeons, burning fagots, tearing the flesh with red-hot pincers, were no longer available arguments of a spiritual church for the salvation of souls.

Burning of books for heresy continued longer than burning of bodies, and it was ignorance rather than care which preserved the Bible with other literary manuscripts from destruction.

It is often asserted that the Church of Rome preserved science, and especially literature, philos-

ophy, and religion, with a jealous custody from vandal hands: the truth is that the Romish Church, possessing temporal power, and representing nearly all there then was of Christianity, instead of cherishing knowledge or the spirit of scientific study, crushed out as far as possible all knowledge that did not concur in her aggrandizement or obey her will.

At an early period of this gathering darkness in Europe the followers of Mahomet were students of science and philosophy, and but for the protection of Moslem power and the consequent return of literary pursuits to Europe with Moslem progress, knowledge would have been held in abeyance, the Reformation retarded perhaps for centuries, and the Bible remain for ages more in the monasteries, concealed by cloistered churchmen.

In the Arab's hand the dying embers of smothered literature were revived by the Arab's breath, and eventually became the blazing torch by which Luther saw the long-lost Bible, and was enabled to unclasp its long-locked lids, and read from its pages to an inquiring age the Gospel of Jesus the Son of God.

It was the unconquerable law of evolution in nature that finally triumphed over the tyranny of a church claiming Divine authority to interpret God's word, and, as some do even yet, Divine authority

to forbid men a better knowledge of God's laws as revealed in nature.

The right of man to think and believe for the salvation of his soul was then, as it were, flashed back upon Europe from the scymitar of the Saracen.

The son of the bondwoman rescued the child of promise, and the sword of the spirit is again tempered with Divine love.

The religion of Mahomet was, in its beginning, a pure monotheism, and as such was a reformation from that of Moses; but, like the religion of Moses, it failed to become even a background for the religion of Jesus, mainly because it became a church militant instead of a church progressive with civilization.

Learning and religion were alike tools of statecraft and ambition until knowledge as well as religion became a slave rather than a guide to man.

In spite of its corruptions, the religion of Ishmael has maintained its hold on the heritage of Isaac for over a thousand years, and even during the decline of its spiritual power has preserved not only its spiritual strength, but has spread and gained more by its missionaries than by its warriors.

Over forty millions to-day obey Victoria as their empress, but worship Mahomet as the prophet of God; and the same fact is seen throughout Asia and

Africa. Islamism has spread into China, and in Asia and Africa has maintained itself side by side with Christian missions, and often with superior success.

In Africa whole tribes of fetich-worshippers have accepted the Koran; in Japan eight millions accept the Koran.

The missionaries of Mahomet are everywhere throughout the East, and the sword of Mahomet still afflicts Christian pilgrims as they visit the holy shrine of their Saviour.

May we not be allowed to believe that even Islamism in its earlier faith may have been, and even yet may again be, a possible pioneer, an entering wedge to open up a pantheistic paganism to the belief in one God, which the theological doctrine of a Triune God so often fails to do? May we not hope that a more liberal Christianity will take up these half-converted pagans, and, without confusing their half-developed minds with a theological Jesus, teach them the simple truth of Jesus as revealed in the Fatherhood of God—at least until a heathen intellect is sufficiently educated to understand the difference between a Trinitarian and a Pantheist.

We thus see that error as well as truth may spread by preaching; and this fact should convince us that to teach an intelligent man religion, we should teach him all there is to know of God in science as well as theology.

In like manner the religion of Buddha springing from Brahmanism, as Christianity did from Mosaism, began five or six hundred years before the Christian era, and is to-day sending more missionaries and making more converts than Christianity; spreading also over a greater extent of country and converting more followers.

It has done this not by persecution or by force of arms, but by preaching the gospel of Buddha, and showing a way, false though it be, to deliverance from evil.

Driven out of India, the land of its birth, as Christianity was driven out of Judea and Asia long after it had been established and flourishing, its devoted missionaries have spread it over Ceylon, Burmah, China, Japan, Tartary, Thibet, Central Asia, Siberia, and even Swedish Lapland, until nearly five hundred millions of our race live and die in the hope and faith of Gautama, their Saviour.

All these religionists of Mahomet, Gautama, or other false faiths, are earnest devotees, believing their religion inspired by God and their own salvation secured by their faith and practice as they have been taught.

If such fruits are borne by the green tree of infancy in pagan thought and development, what might we not hope from a better culture and a like simple faith in the mature tree of intelligence, un-

encumbered by bigotry or superstition and unhindered by heresy-hunters in the garden of the Lord? —a practice introduced by Satan and adopted by too many of the religions of all subsequent times.

It is the inspiration of intelligence and not the inspiration of ignorance that will win upon the intelligence of men and bind their consciences or lead the race in progressive civilization.

If we grope in ignorance when we can grow in intelligence, and grovel in darkness when we can walk in light, we will be without answer or excuse when finally called upon to account for our stewardship.

If we would live with honor and profit, we must accept truth whenever and wherever revealed or recorded.

The maxim of Confucius in its negative form, "Whatsoever you would not that men should do unto you, that do not unto them," and the same maxim by Zoroaster in its positive form, "Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, that do unto them," was as much an inspired rule of life to ancient China and Persia as it was when re-enforced by Jesus five hundred years later.

The maxim was the same, its truth and efficacy the same; but there was not until then a surrounding civilization, a fulness of time, to apply it to all creeds and all people.

Another great truth applied by Jesus, that the

sun and rain were blessings to all alike and were witnesses of God's love and goodness to all, was not a revelation to Jews only, or first made known to that generation.

The witness of the sun began with the first appearance of its rays through chaotic gloom, and the witness of the rain began when its showers first watered the earth.

It is the goodness of God thus manifested, which Paul taught the Romans,* "leadeth to repentance."

It is the love of God thus manifested, as revealed to all, which Jesus taught as proof of the universal Fatherhood of God.

To affirm that such witnesses and such blessings, secured to all alike by eternal and universal law, can be controlled and measured out by the petitions of men, however self-consecrated or holy, is but to fossilize a pagan superstition as the evolution of a perfect faith.

The ancient pagan had his rain enchanters and enchantments; and David, the Prophet, Priest, and King of Israel, hung seven of Saul's family on the same principle.

The modern pagan has these enchantments still, and relies on their use as hopefully and trustfully as modern Christians do on their formal prayers, long

* Romans ii. 4.

orations, and pious platitudes, though the pagan does not know that he thus violates the teaching of Jesus.

The teachings of Jesus were so precise as to the equal and universal application of God's laws to material things, that it is hard to understand how intelligent minds can believe that mere mortal prayer can change or arrest the operation of a law of all creation and instituted for all time, in order to accommodate man's fallen estate and temporary desire.

The teaching of Jesus was so precise in confining prayer to the closet as a personal communion with God, and forbidding it as public worship in the synagogue as well as in the street to be seen of men, that it is hard for true reverence to understand how ministers can make a merit of long prayers in the pulpit, and how other professors do not merit the rebuke of Jesus to the Pharisees for thus assuming a personal influence with God which would render a prayer more effectual from their lips than from the lips of a publican.

And yet we constantly hear men commended for being gifted in prayer—a gift of grace not mentioned by Paul when he enumerated other spiritual gifts.*

* I Corinthians xii. 1-10.

Notwithstanding this belief in the potency of prayer in controlling material laws, and especially in thwarting the Devil, the same theology which holds to such prevailing power with God also believes as equally true that the Devil, who is supposed to curse instead of pray, possesses a controlling power over material laws equal to, and often superseding, the power of God.

Hence the necessity of special intercession on the part of God's people and special interference on the part of God Himself to maintain His own honor and protect His followers.

In the matter of witchcraft, pestilence, heresy, etc., the Devil seems to have triumphed for generations, in spite not only of finite prayers, but in spite of Divine special interference; and theology resorted to burning, hanging, drowning, and torture as necessary accessories to perfect a Divine purpose to purify the church.

It was the organized church which kept up for generations a belief in ghosts, witches, and demoniac possessions, and various other superstitions supposed to be torturing the soul of man; and a like belief in charms, relics of holy saints and holy things, and even the repetition of certain texts as amulets to outwit Satan.

The special providence which causes the lightning to strike a Sabbath-breaker's haystack, or burn a

Sabbath-breaker's house, or sink a Sabbath-breaker's boat, is of the same pagan parentage and must give way to a better knowledge of Divine providence.

For centuries sailors would not commence a voyage on Friday for fear of disaster; it was the Devil's day; and the same superstition influenced landmen, and does to some extent even yet.

Friday is still a hangman's day.

How many would dare to be married on Friday even now?

A thousand similar superstitions have thrived in the midst of churches as religious doctrine, and when they were finally dispelled it was not because the church taught a better theology, but because science taught a better religion.

The domain of material law is not the domain for spiritual intercession, and however much scientific study may enable us to profit by and apply these laws to our benefit or God's glory, they remain the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Denuding the earth of its forests and wasting the soil by work without culture will cause rainless seasons, destructive floods, and wasting famine, though all Christendom joined in prayer to the contrary.

Prayer to God must be in the line of His laws, and not the line of man's fallible will; it must also be in the domain of man's intellectual and spiritual experience.

Our spirits commune with God spiritually, but we commune with God in nature by knowledge of and obedience to His laws as revealed in nature ; and the more we know of God intellectually, the better we can commune with Him spiritually.

This spirit of communing with God spiritually and studying God intelligently will lead us to accept truth as a revelation of God, under all forms and under all circumstances, and honor all efforts for a better belief and a better life, though they are but kindling sparks of the perfect light.

Who can decipher how much Brahma, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, and other heathen philosophers have done to prepare the world for the advent of Jesus?—how much they, and even Mahomet, are doing now to fallow the soil of humanity for the final harvest of peace and love?

The patience, zeal, self-sacrifice, and devotion of heathen philosophers have often been so noble and Christ-like that the God who inspired their goodness should receive the glory ; and the religion which accepts a similar philosophy as part of its essential belief should openly profit by the example, and credit it to God instead of paganism.

It is not now believed that Seneca, though contemporaneous with Paul, was ever a convert to Christianity, or received any of his religious beliefs from apostolic or other Christian sources: he was

literally a heathen philosopher ; and yet his philosophy of religion, except in acquaintance with Christ, differed but little from that of Paul.

The writings of the Roman philosopher in a pantheistic age defended the unity of God ; in an age of luxury and dissipation he advocated good morals and a right life ; in an age of materialism he defended the immortality of the soul. The sweetness and beauty of his life, and his writings on the unity of God, to be worshipped spiritually and without sacrifice ; the relation of man to God, and man to man, are so like those of the apostle, that after Christianity superseded paganism a legend grew up that Paul and Seneca were intimate friends, and fourteen epistles are still extant purporting to have passed between the apostle and the philosopher, and were long believed to be authentic, though now admitted to be spurious. " We are members of one body ; should the hands harm the feet, or the eyes the hands ? " was first written by Seneca in defence of personal purity, and afterwards repeated by Paul. To reject such proofs of God's presence in the mind of Gentiles before the Christian era, is to reject the government of an infinite God over the Gentile world.

CHAPTER III.

INTELLIGENCE AND SCIENCE AIDS TO RELIGION.

IT was the mistake of allowing ignorant intolerance instead of intelligence to rule which lost so much of true religion to the early church. In less than four hundred years after the promulgation of the gospel of peace, although the church had undisputed authority both temporal and spiritual, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome, three great centres of ecclesiastical development and ambition, became also centres of Christian contention and conflict. Colleges, councils, and governments professing the religion of Jesus were vying with each other in burning books and also in burning men and women for reading them; until the very nurseries of religion, as established by the apostles and early fathers were torn by contending creeds, and men were glad to seek protection under the Turkish scymitar and adopt the Moslem faith to escape the worse religion of persecution and strife.

So far as men can now judge, it was well the scymitar of Ishmael swept over the heritage of Isaac, as an apparent agency to save it from a more brutal theology.

Monotheism, the real germ of any true religion, was almost extinguished by the quarrels and creeds of the dying churches of Asia. The personality and being of God the Father was almost forgotten in contentions concerning the personality and office of Christ; and to determine the personality and paternal or *filio que* procession of the Holy Ghost, was of more importance than to "do justly, and to love mercy, and walk humbly before God."* Christ was rejected as a Saviour until polemic zealots could determine the proper proportion of divine and human nature engaged in his mission; and the influence of the Holy Spirit was warded from the hearts of men until it could be definitely settled whether it came from the Father alone, or from both Father and Son. Liberty of Christian thought and liberty of Christian life had been banished from the church on the ground of securing church unity and Christian fellowship. But no license of thought, no liberty of life, in regard to religion could have brought so sore an affliction upon the church as these inhuman attempts to secure unity by stretching Christianity upon the Procrustean bed of Pharisaic ignorance and pride.

Knowledge and liberty, banished from the Church of Rome, were welcomed by the Arab chief as a

* Micah vi. 8.

gift of God, and in the soil of the conqueror grew into new life. In a hundred years from the Hegira the Koran was substituted for creeds from Samarcand to Seville, and the muezzin call of "*Allah Akbar*," "God is great," was heard from the banks of the Indus to the summit of the Pyrenees; astronomy, natural science, literature and art, banished from the temples of Rome, developed in the tent of Ishmael; and afterwards, encouraged by a purer faith, returned to its earlier home, and there re-kindled the fires of religion on the altars of an almost expiring hope. The Bible, long concealed by ignorance in the cloisters of the Romish Church, was brought forth, and the new enlightenment of the people eagerly embraced the Divine truths revealed by the intelligence and learning of Luther. Ignorance had covered Europe for centuries with its pall; knowledge had now entered, and developed intelligence with the open Bible. It was the evangel of a new dispensation. Alas, that so much of the old intolerance still clung and yet clings to the new liberty! With the experience of the past it would seem an easy lesson to learn, that religion should encourage intellectual development as its best friend and sure defence.

But, alas for poor human nature! we have only learned that the bodies of men are not to be burned for unbelief, and the remedy of Paul for heresy

(1 Tim. i. 20; Titus iii. 10) is yet for a while to be better than the teaching of Christ. Theology is yet confounded with religion, and men are still debarred from church privileges for heresy though leading a righteous life. The pulpit still sneers at the science it does not understand, and misrepresents the religion of scientific men it cannot persecute in the flesh.

This is done in face of the fact that the study of science does not encourage infidelity or unbelief, and in face of a long array of men eminent in science who have been warm supporters of Christianity.

It may be true that intellectual development tends to explode theological absurdities, but it is not true that science has ever sought to lessen the distance between right and wrong, or render sin less sinful and odious; but establishes with more and more certainty that a right life is obedience to the laws of God. Caste in India and elsewhere has heretofore been an almost impassable barrier to the introduction of Christianity, but when the locomotive and rail-carriage entered the land, and the Parsee must walk or ride beside a meaner brother, he soon found a text allowing him to ride without pollution.

When water was introduced into Calcutta, the proud Brahmin would not drink from the hydrant

to which the lower caste had access; but when he saw the only alternative was to drink the foul water of the river Hoogly, he soon found a license to drink the pure water of the hydrant, without realizing, as we do, that the first blow was then struck on the entering wedge which was to break up caste.

Thus the introduction of steam, the telegraph, and other triumphs of science are prompt missionaries of Christian equality where other agencies have utterly failed. Thus science at least prepares the way for religious light, and in a few years the Bible of the missionary, instead of the miserable Pundit, will have a controlling influence. Let it be clearly understood that science is not religion, but that it furnishes an ever-widening foundation upon which to build a firm faith in that Power which is outside of and beyond us and "works for righteousness;" clearly proving there should be no barrier between Christians on earth which does not exist in heaven, and that there should be no barrier to intellectual development this side of heaven's perfections.

The fact, however, remains that theology still sneers at science and brings God to shame by substituting words of men for ways of God.

The scientist, as a rule, is as well informed on prominent religious opinions as the theologian, and well knows the difference between pulpit theology

and divine truth; and when he hears teachers of religion advance theology as truth, and assail mere speculations and theories in science as if they were science itself, he is very apt to manifest disgust for such a theology.

A sneering sciolist in the pulpit will sooner or later provoke scoffing from the scientist in the pew.

This disgust at a narrow-minded theology is pronounced the sin of unbelief; and thus, between absurd dogmas on one side and ignorant pedantry on the other, a man without grace is very apt to feel as if he had been condemned for rejecting the oyster when he had only been offered the shell.

The frequent record as news of ministers prohibited the pulpit for heresy by their more orthodox brethren is familiar to all; and it is equally familiar to us that there is no fault to be found with their practical piety, but that they are cast out as unclean for opinions honestly held, and often well sustained by the Bible.

Sermons from the pulpit, editorials in newspaper organs of churches, and books without number are too often based upon the unjust idea that a spiritual and emotional experience is a better rule of life than a spiritual faith founded upon an intelligent conception of God and a righteous life.

A theology purely emotional is necessarily specu-

lative, and subject to all the errors of an emotional and speculative nature.

This tendency to error can only be corrected by the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of reason.

Scientific knowledge would not reject creeds as aids to a proper enjoyment of social religion, or as aids to further development of religious faith; but this would be by making creeds to act as servants and not as taskmasters.

Mere knowledge, whether in religion or science, will never produce entire unity of doctrine as to creeds in religion or theories in science; but these creeds and theories, if properly used, may serve as picket-guards to advancing truth: they may be used as scouts to explore or as guards to defend, but in either case must be subservient and subordinate to that common central principle, of which they are neither the strength nor the life.

These remarks as to creeds and theories would be superfluous and even hypercritical were it not the fact that theological beraters and theoretical sceptics are a daily nuisance to both religion and science.

I might quote at length illustrations of this theological pedantry, from the over-confident young graduate of a seminary to the venerable D.D., who thus not only rebuke men of science as enemies of religion, but in so doing display the most lamentable

ignorance of the questions they discuss and the knowledge they condemn.

A single illustration will suffice to show that I am not unfair in this statement, at least as to the D.D.

I quote from a book called "Modern Genesis," by a teacher of religion. As the Alleghany Seminary at Meadville, Penn., conferred upon the author the usual semi-lunar appendage of theological lore apparently as a reward for this his only literary publication, it is fair to infer that the Alleghany Seminary (a religious institution) indorses the astronomy of the author, whom they so delighted to honor.

Page 199 of "Modern Genesis," after referring to the fact that we do not see one hemisphere of the moon, says, "Why can we not observe that hemisphere? Why is it always turned away from us? Evidently because the moon is not balanced upon its centre. The hemisphere of greater density is toward the earth, and the earth holds it there. . . . We agree that the form of each of the planetary bodies is affected by its axial rotation, . . . but is any such effect possible to the moon? We venture to express the conviction that it is not. The moon then cannot be an oblate spheroid. Why do we come to this conclusion? Because of its diurnal motion. The moon does *not revolve upon its own axis* as the earth does, and as other planets do.

The earth is the centre of its diurnal rotation," etc., etc.

Charity might, perhaps, excuse the "diurnal" rotation as a mistake of the printer; but when we are told in precise terms that "The moon does not revolve on its own axis," and "therefore cannot be an oblate spheroid," and an argument deduced therefrom against the nebular hypothesis, we are compelled to accept the statement that the "diurnal" revolution of the moon around the earth is asserted in good faith, if not with good sense.

It is but fair to add, that this quotation is not a sample of the entire book: it is, perhaps, the worst, as containing more ignorance of astronomy in fewer lines than any other portion; but there is more like it.

This Doctor of Divinity and apparently the Alleghany Seminary are evidently ignorant of one of the fundamental laws of planetary motion, not at all depending upon their nebular origin, and by the operation of which the moon, as well as other heavenly bodies, is guided in its axial and orbital motions.

The learned author discovers a "diurnal" revolution, which all other astronomers have failed to find, and discards as valueless the monthly revolution, in which we had until now believed most fully.

He seems without the faintest idea that the com-

bination of the axial and orbital revolutions of the moon always keeps the same hemisphere of the moon towards the earth, and this too without throwing all the lunar water and air "towards the other side."

All of this learned logic follows immediately after he has enunciated the very praiseworthy maxim, "What we *know*, and not what we conjecture, should be the basis of our generalization."

Proceeding upon this maxim of what he knows, and the moon legend above quoted, he, with theological flippancy, corrects the errors of Herschel, Helmboltz, La Place, Lyle, Winchel, Spencer, Tyndal, and others, not only as to the nebular theory, but in other like investigations, which he, after the fashion of many others, claims inimical to religion, as he understands it.

After this, let us extend the right hand of fellowship to the Rev. John Jasper, of Richmond, Virginia.

The wonder is, that one so honored in divinity and astronomy did not tell us that the moon was left in this strange eccentricity as to "diurnal" and orbital revolutions when Joshua commanded it to stand still in the valley of Ajalon.

It is clear, however, that this luminous writer does *not* read the London *Times*, for some years since a certain Mr. Jellinger Symonds worked out this same problem, with the same result, and published his

production in the *Times* for the enlightenment of astronomers.

If, however, the author had condescended to read "Helen's Babies," he might have looked at the picture in a common-school astronomy, and then he would have seen "How the weels go wound."

If this reference to "Modern Genesis" is considered severe, the author and Mr. Jellinger Symonds may at least comfort themselves with the assurance that they are supported by the Rev. John Jasper, of Richmond, Virginia, and that they will never be called upon to bear the accusation which Festus brought against Paul: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." *

It is also a wonder that the author of "Modern Genesis" did not *deny* that the moon presents always the same side to the earth rather than give a fool's reason to account for it.

Pope Urban VIII. was somewhat excusable when he humiliated and imprisoned a high-priest of the stars, for the Bible, as he read it, asserted that the sun did go around the earth; and when the astronomer of Pisa declared the contrary he was to be converted or punished.

But the Bible did not tell this modern D.D.

* Acts xxvi. 24.

of Alleghany College that the moon does not revolve on its axis now, or even when it stood still in the valley of Ajalon.

When a man studies theology and a theological seminary garnishes his name with the D.D.'s of Doubtful Decoration for uttering such twaddle as above, we may well understand that the world was not created for the accommodation of such stupidity, but for the culture of reason; and that it is not governed according to the superstitious prayers of ignorant men, but by the eternal laws of God, to be known and applied by all.

We may also understand by such examples how ignorance wrests science from its proper use and destroys its proper influence, and apply the knowledge to religion as well as to science.

Peter tells us plainly that it is the ignorant and unlearned who also "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction." *

It may seem presumptuous for a mere layman to question the accuracy or learning of a D.D., but I take refuge in the words of inspiration as recorded by Moses: "If a prophet shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, . . . he shall die." †

* 2 Peter iii. 16.

† Deut. xviii. 20.

I would not "slaughter" the moon prophet, but beseech him to get wisdom and understanding.

It is just such divinity and just such science, "falsely so called," upon which systems of a spurious religion subsist, and whereby a true knowledge of God is hindered.

If a man will not study God's laws in the works which he *can see*, how can he interpret the movings of His Spirit in ways which he cannot see?

Any religion, to be universal, must be based on facts, and a fitness to universal man in all the relations of life here and a reasonable hope in the life hereafter.

It must be adapted to rich and poor; simple and acceptable to those who are necessarily ignorant, but expansive as the most expansive intellect.

The studies of expanded intellect, however, are not to be made standards in all of their extent for the less developed, as necessary to salvation; nor must simple truths, because sufficient for the simple, bar the way to higher knowledge.

Just here is where the legitimate authority of creeds and catechisms, councils and assemblies, should be clearly defined.

A creed should not prevent intellectual inquiry or spiritual enlightenment, nor should it bind the conscience of the ignorant.

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but

not to doubtful disputations,"* is as good a rule now as when given by Paul.

The teaching and practice of Christ enjoin a simple faith, without any complications of ceremonies or tests of orthodoxy.

He organized no churches, instituted no church discipline, and did not even have honest disciples; yet he sent them all forth to preach in his name: Judas the traitor, as well as John the beloved; Thomas doubted after the resurrection, and Peter dissembled after the miraculous Pentecost.

To Christ the first commandment was the sufficient summary of the Old Testament, and "Love thy neighbor as thyself" was the adopted summary of the New.

Search the Scriptures, was the rule for individual thought, and the teaching of the Spirit was given as the rule for individual faith for all time.

We will see hereafter how this rule requires a careful study of God's ways in nature, as well as in recorded words; and any rule which detracts from this freedom of inquiry and freedom of faith is a delusion and a snare.

The universal study and application of physical laws as they govern our social relations and our material existence, and of spiritual laws as they

* Rom. xiv. 1.

govern the world of mind, will ever indicate seed-time and harvest to both mind and matter.

When the veil of the Temple was rent, the power of a privileged or persecuting priesthood was cancelled forever.

Every soul was made as free to worship in its own way as the intellect was free to make that worship intelligent and worthy of the inspiration breathed upon man in the garden of Eden, and promised in renewed measure through all time by the Holy Spirit.

Such a religion is peaceful and progressive.

Such have not always been the theologies of the past; they were not peaceful, and not always progressive.

To theology, knowledge is often heresy, and remains so until increased intelligence compels a reform.

The astronomy of Copernicus, Bruno, and Galileo was heresy to the church in their day, but is orthodox now in all of the churches, except perhaps the Seminary of Alleghany.

Spontaneous generation—or evolution, as it is called—is heresy in most of our pulpits now, but was orthodox in 1674, when the clergy in Florence raised the cry of “heresy” against Francesco Redi for saying maggots were not a spontaneous generation of decomposing flesh, but a product of eggs deposited there by flies.

The Bible, as they read it, said, most distinctly, that the carcass of Samson's lion brought forth a swarm of bees.

This is a fair specimen of verbal inspiration, and a fair illustration of the intolerance of an ignorant theology.

In all cases where the church is not emancipated from the rule of ignorance, whether governed by Pope Urban or Pope Synod or Pope General Assembly, a man of good influence in society and leading a righteous life is liable to theological ostracism for a belief, or want of belief, in some favorite doctrine of the church, though that belief, or want of belief, is not a test of God by the gospel of Moses or Christ.

Such was the error of James and John, and not the teaching of Christ.

When John came to Christ, complaining of a heretic who, though casting out devils, refused to follow him, proposing that Christ should stop him, "Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us." *

Human intelligence is a gift of God to guide us on earth and educate us for eternity; and a theology which discourages intelligence will sooner or later,

* Luke ix. 50.

through ignorance or self-righteousness, degenerate into bigotry and arrogance.

There is no escape from the conclusion that the intelligence which gives us supremacy over the animal creation, and the soul which is inseparably connected with it, must work hand in hand in order that we may know God in such a manner that we may serve and enjoy him, here and hereafter.

It is by intelligence we learn more and more of God, and this is science; it is by the intelligent application of this knowledge we can love and honor Him more and more, and this is religion.

Thus, we learn that "pretty flowers" are not beneath a Christian's care; that their beauty is greater than that of Solomon, for the Lord Himself arrays them, that they send up a ceaseless perfume which is sweet incense to Him; that the insect whose daily food is in these same flowers hums an unceasing anthem of thanksgiving and praise.

Every breeze bears to us the sweet odor of the flower, and the melody of the insect song.

Shall we harden our hearts, that we respond not to the praise and worship?

Let us not, then, refuse knowledge, but study God everywhere, bearing in mind that, privileged as we are, we are but atoms in that great universe which God has made, and but a trifling part even of the earth upon which we live.

All that we can learn of every branch of science will not be too much for intelligent worship, and less than that is robbing God of the full measure of the service due to Him.

CHAPTER IV.

SCIENCE AND TRAINING.

WHAT has been said as to the necessity of science in religion would be sufficient if the large proportion of professing Christians were not governed by blind faith, rather than by a reasonable belief; but line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, seems necessary to rescue religion from worldly inferences, and elevate it to the higher standard of intelligence, rather than degrade it to the lower standard of ignorance or superstition.

A certain amount of intellectual application is necessary to understand even simple truths as recorded in the Bible.

A very large amount of intellect, well applied, is necessary to understand all its details; but this can only be developed by studying with scientific accuracy the laws of God as revealed in physical science, and independent of the Bible record.

It may be true that we walk by faith and not by sight, but this faith should be founded on things seen and known.

“For the invisible things of Him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being under-

stood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead ; so that they [sinful and ignorant] are without excuse." *

It may be useful, therefore, to consider the question as to physical science a little more in detail.

Tyndall says science includes three elements :

1. Observation of facts.
2. Induction of laws from these facts.
3. Verification of these laws by experience.

For convenience as well as accuracy we may divide the general subject into various parts.

Physical science is the knowledge of nature, including all created existences.

Astronomy is the part of physical science which treats of the facts known or to be ascertained concerning the celestial bodies.

This branch teaches how the "pretty stars" and all the hosts of heaven were marshalled by the hand divine, and how "the morning stars sang together" their song of praise.

Geology treats of the structure of the earth on which we live, the causes of its physical features, and its history.

Botany treats of the structure of plants and trees, the functions of their parts, the law of their growth

* Romans i. 20.

and distribution, and their relation to man as well as to each other.

This branch of science not only teaches us the wonderful provision for growth and continuance in the flower, but the beneficence of God in correlating the beauty of the flower to the perfecting of the fruit, so that it may be food for man.

These are but divisions for general use, and are subdivided again and again for closer study.

Tyndall has devoted the best years of his life to the investigation of heat, light, electricity, sound, etc.

Huxley, to the study of living beings and the laws of their life and development.

Agassiz, amid a multitude of other topics, learned more than others of the habits and structure of fish ; but found his life too short to do more than prepare an easy way for his successors.

Torrey, Gray, and others of equal note have devoted all of their energies to learn and make known to others the wonderful mysteries of vegetable life. The Darwins, but especially the present distinguished Charles Darwin, have devoted an entire life to patient personal investigation to ascertain, as far as may be, the laws by which all living things develop and perpetuate their species or develop and change their former organization. It was not difficult to trace the various breeds of dogs back to the common cur, or the numerous varieties of pigeons

back to the common rock-pigeon ; but how the first dog or first pigeon originated, as such, has not been determined as a fact of science. Mr. Darwin thinks that further investigation will, at some future day, ascertain that all forms of life are the outcome of a single primitive form, and that subsequent developments are produced by various compounds or combinations of the simpler structure, under modifying circumstances, such as heredity of special qualities, natural selection, survival of the fittest, etc., in the continual struggle for life. The patience, industry, modesty, and honesty of these investigations, and similar ones by others, have opened up a long vista, as yet shadowy, but with glimpses of a light that bids fair to reveal a greater wonder of God's ways than has been revealed since the discoveries of Newton. If we have once forced upon our intelligence a law of life to which Darwin believes he has the clue, we must openly deny allegiance to our Maker, or we must admit our personal responsibility more practically than we do now ; for it is only by so doing we can preserve our bodies pure, as temples of God, and make habits of body as well as emotions of mind an essential part of practical religion. Thus parents, instead of ignorantly transmitting to their children anger, pride, and self-indulgence, would seek to transmit the better qualities, and thus render it easier to train them to love, tem-

perance, and virtue. Whether Darwin's doctrine be true to its fullest extent or not, enough has been established to teach us more than we ever understood before how children suffer unnecessarily for a parent's fault, and how, without implicating the justice or the tender mercy of God, He visits the sins of the fathers upon the children.

If teachers of religion and Christian parents, instead of sneering at Darwin, would inform themselves of just what he does teach, they would find enough which, if well enforced from the pulpit and well obeyed in the pew, would soon not only improve bodily health and happiness, but promote spiritual religion. Let a parent fully realize by proper knowledge that a sin of the soul, when indulged, modifies and degrades his physical structure, and that the brain itself and every molecule of the body is thus made a partaker of sin, and if he is not worse than heathen, he will correct bad habits of mind as well as body, instead of transmitting them to his children.

The physiological side of medical science teaches the laws of life, which every parent should understand sufficiently to observe them: one quarter of the time which is sacrificed to studying and following the pernicious laws of fashion would, if properly devoted to studying and following the divine laws of life, regenerate the human race.

Polite society swarms with capable but culpable parents who know and follow all the changing laws of fashion up to the latest date. Fashion may defile the person by its filthiness, or destroy health by its unfitness, but society, in the church as well as out of it, studies its behests and obeys its mandates. At the same time they give no attention to the fitness of fashion to a proper observance of the laws of life; much less do they give time or attention to dietetics, ventilation, exercise, etc., which they know to be essential to health. Thus a sound religion requires the aid of science, for religion as well as philosophy has suffered for the want of it. It is the scientific study of human nature in mind as well as body which has relieved religion of a belief in witchcraft, demoniacal possession, and a vast amount of other superstitions, at once the shame of religion and a barrier to its progress.

Such are but a few specifications of studies known as science, and necessary to our moral and physical well-being; but they are sufficient to illustrate the idea, though, if space allowed, the notice could be extended. Agriculture, music, sculpture, and the whole range of art, and the arts—all this is simply a knowledge of things as they exist and are a part of manifest laws about us. There is as yet no question as to who ordained these laws, or why they were first established; only how they operate.

Every teacher of religion should study at least superficially this wide range of facts, that he may know the relation they bear to his hearers, as accountable beings, and teach them, if need be, such general truths as will aid them to improve and enjoy life here and prepare for the life hereafter; for all knowledge correlates with our final destiny as well as our present inheritance.

It does not follow from these remarks that every one should be learned in science or learned in religion; it simply follows that all should study truth and facts as far as within their reach and consistent with their duties of life, the doing of which faithfully is a primary and essential part of any religion. The first duty of every mother, for instance, is to study and practise in her own person the laws of health, rather than the laws of fashion. She will thus secure her own right life, and, by example as well as precept, train her children in the same way. As the young mind is developed and can receive religious instruction, the mother should instil the simple truths of a right life, and the bearing of the truths upon a life hereafter. No parent is excusable for extending a parental solicitude elsewhere than in the home until the first duty of parental teaching is performed at home, until the laws of life so necessary to health, and at least a few of the great truths necessary for a firm foundation of a

religious faith, are known and taught. A child, if properly instructed and properly trained in the laws of health, will not, but in exceptional cases, become a libertine or a drunkard in after-life, any more than he would put his hand in a flame he knows will burn. The acquired habits of body are frequently, perhaps generally, formed in early life, and are just as powerful for good or evil as natural temperament. For these acquired habits parents are responsible. Especially are parents responsible when they transmit their own sins of passion, intemperance, selfishness, etc.; for a child thus born with a diseased digestion and insatiable craving for stimulus has already been started upon a downward career: let this be supplemented by indulgence in early childhood, and a ruined life is more than probable.

When a child grows up diseased and scrofulous from improper eating, the parent is responsible for the violation of an essential law of life, and the child suffers for the sin of the parent, whether the parent has sinned through wilful ignorance or equally wilful weakness of wicked indulgence. The parent finds no difficulty in knowing the hammer in the hand of the child will break a glass, and finds no difficulty in preventing its use; nor is there any more difficulty in knowing that certain indulgences in infancy produce bad health, or that want of re-

straint in young life is a sure source of temptation from within, and a ready suggestive of those temptations from without which beset the life of youth.

This is also true of religious belief: a virtuous life, even if resulting from acquired habits, is suggestive of a better faith; but, in addition to these acquired habits of body, the child should be taught, as soon as it can understand, that these laws of God are to be observed not only for its own health and happiness, but also for the good of others and the carrying out of that greater law of God which is good alike to all His creatures.

Thus a religious sentiment and a soul responsibility is developed from within, as it were, outwardly: instead of growing up a victim to a diseased body, a prey to bad habits and depraved principles, the child grows up to regard health and happiness as the gift of God by obedience to His laws, the body as the temple for His service, and the soul as a willing priest to worship the Creator and keep His temple undefiled. Thus instead of self-indulgence, as a stimulus to sin, we have self-restraint, as the handmaid to virtue, and self-restraint grows to be an ordinary and natural condition instead of a self-righteous and pharisaic accomplishment. Doing good to others becomes the normal condition of a right life. The general acceptance and practice of such duties would not only increase individual re-

sponsibility, but would also elevate the Christian character. We could not, it is true, lay to our souls the flattering unction that we were helpless victims of Adam's sin, but we could have the higher privilege of working with God in working out our salvation by co-operating in His plans, established before the foundation of the world.

Surely this is better than an ignorant submission to sin, regarding God as at enmity not only with us, but the study of His own laws, and regarding ourselves as victims of vengeance for Adam's transgression to be rescued at some unknown period in some mysterious manner, perhaps by some spasmodic experience which *may* flow on perchance to a knowledge of intelligent religion, but quite as likely die out in disgust or bloom out in self-righteous pharisaism. All that is here claimed for knowledge and understanding of physical laws, as the rule of training in young life, also applies to the proper understanding of religious truths. A child is first to be taught the simpler facts of natural law before it is confused by higher problems, however necessary the higher problems may be to a more developed condition. So, also, a child is to be taught the simpler truths of God before it is confused with the conclusions or creeds of men. It must realize there is a great unseen Spirit, God, as the maker of all things, before it is confused with hypostatic enigmas as to

His dual or triune personality. It must know right and wrong as parental teaching applied to its own soul, by divine influence, before it is confounded with the entanglements, or called upon to decide between the dogmas, of the Greek or Roman Church, as to the paternal or filial procession of the Holy Ghost with the most simple faith in God as the basis of a fully developed belief. Creeds will come fast enough, and after all require restraint ; but with the creeds as the basis of youthful belief there is an equal chance that, as the mind matures and finds the faith of its childhood false, it may discard all creeds as mere ignorant assumption or hypocritical pretence, and perhaps discard religion altogether as part and parcel of the same profession.

This brings us to the general statement as to what we should know, and the relation of this knowledge to daily life. First of all, God does not require us to study either science or theology to the neglect of daily duties, but as aids to perform those duties better. The first duty of every parent, and a continuous duty through life, is to train a child to bodily health and right life as a law of God, and the enjoyment of such obedience as evidence of God's loving-kindness ; that sin and sorrow are not inflictions of God's wrath, but violations of beneficent provision for the well-being and happiness of the race. The simplicity of instruction to a young mind should follow the

same rule adopted by the heavenly Father in instructing the mind of man in the infancy of early creation. A simple knowledge of material things was accomplished by a simple child-like religion, but the mistake of man in every succeeding age has been to consider his religious belief as perfect. No matter how great the revival of mere intellectual knowledge, there has ever been a resistance of the religion of the day to profit by that intellectual growth as an essential condition to a better faith; but the higher mysteries of religion are at the same time presented to the young mind as necessary elements of belief.

Thus the profession of religion is behind a true standard in scientific accuracy or extent of knowledge, and is equally at fault by retaining loose and superstitious standards of faith. As childhood merges into manhood and individual responsibility assumes prominence, we should study and learn ourselves as something that exists within us and separate from all other things. No man can mistake himself for anything else, and therefore whatever he learns concerning himself becomes individual and is always at his immediate service, and should be at the service of his religious faith. All other objects of creation except this inner self are outside of us, but by study become part of us, and may, for better or worse, modify our destiny. We are to study this outside

world and its laws as we have opportunity, then, and apply this knowledge so that we may seek, and perchance find, a reasonable perception of that Power beyond ourselves, and beyond the material world outside of us, which is revealed in goodness through His manifold works. In this way a knowledge of God's works and laws is a knowledge of God Himself: better knowledge leads to better love and better service. The theological objection to a scientific study of nature would seem to infer that the knowledge obtained is an actual creation of the study, but we must remember that the laws of nature or the facts of science are not created by a study thereof any more than our obligations to God originate in a church profession. The laws of astronomy and every fact of science exist, whether men learn to love them or scorn and reject them.

It is our duty to honor God and accept His offered grace whether we profess to do so or not; thus the works and laws of God remain our teachers whether we accept the teaching or reject it. Paul tells us on this subject very clearly that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." * Thus we learn by

* Romans i. 20.

apostolic teaching as well as by study that it is in the ordinary way of God's providence to reveal spiritual truth by natural law. It should not discredit science or the study of science that its votaries draw erroneous conclusions as to the mysterious personality of God or the equally mysterious beginnings of created things, any more than it should discredit religion because theologians wrangle and draw false conclusions about spiritual things. Let us adhere to a true religion on one side and a true science on the other, and never fear collision. Spiritual conceptions may be based upon material facts, but this does not constitute materialism a judge of spiritual experience, nor does any scientist, so far as I know, pretend that scientific knowledge should judge or oppose the faith of any one in that spiritual experience that is based upon the unseen and invisible. Science only affirms that such matters of emotional belief should not be a standard to determine or discredit scientific accuracy in the study of natural laws, neither should such emotional experience be accepted as authority to determine the faith of others. The knowledge of scientific facts and the application of that knowledge to our daily duties is quite a different matter from a spiritual experience here and a spiritual faith as to the hereafter. The two are independent of each other, yet by working in harmony the culture of one will always aid the culture of the

other. It is the province of science to investigate cosmic matter everywhere, and it should be ascertained that primitive star-dust had furnished the germ of living monera to our earth, and these monera had finally developed a perfect man; we would still know that man, whether formed from a lump of clay by the hand of God or evolved from a particle of protoplasm by a law of God, would still be a spiritual child of the same Father, created by the same power, breathed upon by the same breath, and allotted to the same destiny.

Man was already a perfect animal when the Deity breathed upon him His own Spirit, thus elevating him above all other created beings, and, more than all, giving him the power to know and comprehend his Creator. Not only this, but he was to develop himself by this gift and transmit the development thus acquired to others. When God brought the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field to Adam that he might name them, it was because He had already given him the intellect to name them understandingly, according to their nature and habits. "And whatsoever Adam called every living thing, that was the name thereof." Very few nowadays know as much about natural history as Adam did, but we do know more than we utilize, and we are ignorant of many things easy to be known and necessary for spiritual profit and a just appreciation of

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religious truths. The more we profit by what we know God has done in nature, the less will we dogmatize about what we do not know, and the better we will understand that "in wisdom He made them all." If we appreciate properly how God "so clothes the flowers of the field," and so feeds the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth that not a sparrow falls without His counsel, how much easier will we realize that He will care for us, even though we are "of little faith"!

The more we study how the heavens and the earth were made, the better we can understand how the heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth forth His handiwork; how "day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge," until there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. In the unceasing harmony of law, the perpetuity, beneficence, and goodness of its operation, we realize that mind and matter are alike of God; that He is over all and in all—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Individually we see that in the body we are but atoms in the throng of beings and things which declare His glory. But spiritually we learn a higher note, and are taught a solo in that choral song, by which we can say in confidence, "Our Father which art in heaven," and believe in faith that, though our voice may cease from the earthly choir, our song of praise will never

end, for the dying body will but release the spirit, which will hereafter chant the doxology, "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

CHAPTER V.

THEOLOGY.

THEOLOGY claimed for nearly a thousand years that reading the Bible, without other knowledge, was sufficient both for edification and salvation. It also claimed that the Bible must be accepted and understood by the church hierarchy. This doctrine once established, the church through all these centuries became a fruitful mother of ignorance, bigotry, superstition, and persecution.

During all this millennium of church rule the free-born intellect of man crouched a slave at the feet of a despotic church which professed liberty in Christ Jesus. While Ishmael the wanderer was developing the power of intelligence, Isaac the son of promise was sinking deeper in ignorance, and but for the wisdom of God overruling the wickedness of men, the crescent instead of the cross might have been the symbol of resistance to the tyranny of the mediæval church.

Church religion, though fully sustained by temporal power, was dying out by its own inherent corruption; but for the infidel, who had seized the fallen torch of science and rekindled its dying blaze,

the dark ages might have brooded over Europe for other centuries.

God thus taught the world not only that every man must be allowed a knowledge of the Bible, but that to enjoy a saving faith he must be allowed the exercise of intelligence to read it understandingly, or priestly rule would supersede liberty in Christ.

God thus taught men that knowledge was necessary to a progressive religion, and that, although men might serve God in bodily ceremonies, they were also to study and serve Him with the intellect and soul.

The doctrine that a church without science cannot develop the human race here stands out in bold relief, and that an ignorant or exclusive theology is an excrescence to be destroyed, not a growth to be nurtured.

We here see that to separate religion from reason is to expose it to all the waywardness of the senses, the bigotry of superstition, the bitterness of persecution, and self-righteousness of phariseism.

Peter tells us this very plainly when he writes that there are things in the Scripture hard to be understood, and which "the unleavened and unstable wrest to their own destruction." *

This is want of learning, it is true ; but so long as

* II. Peter iii. 16.

teachers of religion assume undue authority as spiritual guides, and whether from ignorance or jealousy derogate from the influence of scientific study, or undervalue the work of scientific men, they necessarily subject religion itself to reproach from educated men who regard the teacher as a fair exponent of his faith.

This, perhaps, ought not to be the result ; but such is the law of our nature, and such is the result of that semi-inspired call to the office and semi-inspired fitness for its functions which seems to be considered in the churches as a peculiar heritage.

But every teacher of religion should know and understand this phase of human nature before he presumes to tickle the ear of a narrow-minded listener by untruthful flings at science or scientific studies ; and especially before he attempts to belittle scientific men.

Nothing pleases narrow-minded ignorance more than a sneer at higher intelligence, especially if the teacher add to this the too frequent concomitant of this kind of teaching, a certain goodyism of self-satisfying talk about "higher life" and similar transcendental trash, which is but a sugar-coated gossip about solemn truths, and very far from being a substitute for intelligent belief or a righteous life.

Of all the religious diseases of the present day, this "goody good" talk about "inner life," "higher

life," and "suffering for Christ" is the most disgusting to intelligent minds, because it not only caters to a self-satisfied sanctity, but reveals a covert contempt for a better intelligence. It is the duty of every Christian to "search the Scriptures," and under present rule it is also a free privilege; but it is not possible to do this intelligently without the aids of science, either employed personally or adopted from the study of others.

No man pretends that a mason is a better mason, or a carpenter a better carpenter, because he is ignorant of the literature of his trade; no one pretends a lawyer is a better lawyer, or a physician a better physician, because he neglects scientific studies, even beyond the routine of his profession. If we are thus practical in the pursuit of merely temporal and temporary interests, why stultify our intellectual nature and cripple our progress in a better life by remaining ignorant of any knowledge God has placed within our reach? Why go through life with our heads bowed like bulrushes, when our Divine Master calls us to the mountains of His glory, where we may also be more like Him? When David said, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made, . . . and that my soul knoweth right well," * he referred to the law of his physical life as well as the soul resident of the

* Ps. cxxxix. 14.

body. He recognized the responsibility of this knowledge when he further adds, "One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts." * Science reveals God as the father of our spirits, as the framer of our bodies; for our bodies are a part of that material creation outside of us which we study and analyze as matter, governed by the common laws of life. It is the study itself, the mind work, which reveals a spirit existence within ourselves; which, and which only, can realize, if it cannot fathom, the existence of controlling spirit beyond us.

When our highest intelligence fully developed fails to penetrate an endless array of mystery in the world of creation, we must admit a creative intelligence beyond and superior to our own. When this intelligence by study and research further finds that these mysterious creations—from the largest planetary orb that speeds its everlasting course beyond our unaided vision, down to the smallest meteor which burns to ashes before our sight; from the mastodon to the mite; from the eagle to the insect, from the insect down to the smallest atom of protoplasm, from man, who talks with God, to the molecule of which he is framed—are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, it must be proof that, with this great

* Ps. cxlv. 4.

Creator above us, "a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years."

The lightning, which bursts from cloud to cloud in flashing brilliance or splits the knotted oak in its greeting to the earth, was to ancient Israel but a mysterious minister with chariot and horses of fire. It is to us a beneficent agency of blessing to man and beast; yet it is the same, except the added knowledge of its usefulness. The same sunlight which gave life and beauty to Adam in Eden still illumines the universe of his race; the same bow Noah saw spanning the heavens spans them now.

When intelligence recognizes a harmonious meeting through all these extremes, through all these diversities an undoubted unity, and all working together with a precision which could only result from a single design, it also recognizes the work of but one creative power. It is evident that this endless diversity, this unfathomable variety of creation, can only be kept in harmony so precise by one Deity creating all things in the beginning and presiding over all things unto the end. Men may differ as to the name by which this Deity shall be known, and as to the modes of His manifestation; men may differ about terms in describing a personality or spirituality as to His divine essence; but the fact remains, over and above all human dispensation, that God reveals

Himself materially to our senses and intellectually to our souls.

“It is a blessed thought that the reign of law, which is so wonderful to us, is the law of other worlds than ours, and extends beyond the realm of human life ; for we know that all other intelligences in other planets, if such there be, are knowing God by the same laws and revelations by which He is known to us ; and when our eyes shall close upon the scenes of time and change—when we shall stand, as we all hope to stand, in the everlasting presence of Deity, and there see revealed the goodness and glory of God, not only to beings of earth, but in all that He has created, we will realize that we are but a small part of an unbounded creation, and that millions like ourselves, in the same and other forms of being, have also lived under the same benign government, have seen and studied the same wonderful works, enjoyed the same goodness, and, being finally rescued from apparent death in time by the same redeeming love, may join in one common anthem to tender mercy and redeeming grace, and join with the whole host of Heaven,

‘Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.’ ”

It is true no scientific scrutiny can unveil the mystery of Divine Being, or define the essence of His

existence; we cannot to-day, any more than we could three thousand years ago, answer the question of Zophar to Job, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" * and we are compelled to admit, with David, that "His greatness is unsearchable," † and with Solomon that "No man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." ‡

Paul fully confirms this as to the moral world when he says that God's "judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out." § Nor can science go beyond this, but is also compelled to speak of the "secret of Divine Being as unknowable." Thus the wisdom of Solomon, the poetry of David, the theology of Paul, and the philosophy of Spencer concur in the mystery of a Divine Being as well as the mystery of matter.

The fact, however, remains that the Supreme Power is ever-present and ever-abiding; that enough is revealed to instruct us in all that relates to our present being and relative duties, and enough to fix our final responsibility.

In this view of God's work and our responsibility we cannot study the laws of natural things too thoroughly or obey them too implicitly. Such

* Job xi. 7.

† Psalms cxlv. 3.

‡ Eccl. iii. 11.

§ Romans xi. 33.

knowledge and such obedience work no hardship to us, but, by making known to us in advance God's way of working, enable us to profit by such knowledge on earth, and to enjoy also an intelligent hope in the great hereafter.

The more we develop our intellect the higher conception we will have of the God made manifest, and this knowledge improved by the soul will give it a higher conception of God made manifest to our spirits.

As a rule, the more exact and extended our knowledge the more exact and intelligent will be our religion. Every true worshipper, ignorant or enlightened, embodies in the Deity he worships the best attributes and qualities which he himself can conceive, but the characteristics of Deity as conceived by an ignorant mind will fall below the characteristics of Deity as conceived by an intelligent mind just so far as the ignorance of the one is below the intelligence of the other. There must be some knowledge of the works and ways of a supreme being as the basis of the most simple religion. The more our intellectual capacity is developed the more exalted will be our spiritual worship, provided spirit and intellect work in that harmony and love of truth so clearly required by God.

Scientific study is God's way of revealing to man the plan of His working in the material world, and

thus making known not only the glories of His creation but His goodness and love, bringing the intelligence and love of God in actual contact with the intelligence and love of His creatures. It is true that with abounding knowledge sin may also abound, and knowledge may even strengthen sin; but in like manner will grace also abound, and knowledge will strengthen grace. It is the duty of abounding grace to see to it that sin does not monopolize science, but that Christian faith, by the aid of new knowledge and higher development, becomes "the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." George Eliot, in "Daniel Deronda," among many platitudes brings out this epigrammatic truth: "Our life becomes more spiritual by capacity for thought." We may enlarge this statement, and assume that our life becomes more spiritual as our capacity is enlarged. Whether this capacity shall develop a good or evil factor in our nature is for a true religion to determine. The capacity is there and will develop. If religion employ it in God's service, it will develop for His glory; but if rejected by religion, it may become tributary to sin. Intellect and soul are more nearly associated than body and soul: intellect is the connecting link between body and soul, and is more nearly allied to soul in the nature of its operations. If we cultivate this nearer relationship, intellect and soul will draw

· nearer together, and the body render more willing service instead of slavish resistance. The body, the house in which the spirit lives on earth, and its senses are the ever-ready tempters to sin and sorrow: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak;" for, as St. Paul forcibly puts it, "There is a natural [carnal] body, and there is a spiritual body;"* and again, "There is a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."† It is impossible, therefore, to overestimate the importance of thoroughly understanding all those laws of matter as well as of mind which enter into the formation of our human nature; for, as Paul further adds, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."‡ Thus we are assured that the mental and material elements of our being, if properly working together, will so far control temptation as to secure the entire humanity to a willing worship of one God, the Jehovah of the Jew, as the framer of our bodies and the father of our spirits. Here appears forcibly the great fact that our bodies are a part of the material world outside of ourselves; owned and controlled by us to a certain extent, but only owned and controlled by laws of God govern-

* I. Cor. xv. 44. † Romans vii. 23. ‡ Romans viii. 13.

ing other living bodies, and to a less extent governing all bodies. The personal identity, the real entirety, of existence is spiritual. We grow from pulsing infancy to mature manhood, from maturity to declining life, and the identity remains. All that was material has changed, times without number; the cheek that once bloomed with blush of youth and beauty has become yellow and wrinkled in age and infirmity; the strong frame has become feeble and tottering; but the intellect and soul are still identified with every item of existence. The body has lived by a material law governing matter, and the soul has lived and developed by a spiritual law. The body and soul, thus inseparably connected in earthly life, are yet distinct and separate as to life here and existence hereafter. The natural body, though governed by natural laws, is still subject to the spiritual nature, and thus subordinated to the service of God. Thus we see the stature of a full-grown Christian is made up by all attainable knowledge of natural laws, and especially the laws of the inner and outer life, and also by a spirit depending upon the Holy Spirit as revealed and promised, which, by applying all divine teaching, enables the entire man to live according to the divine law; thus not only beginning but working out a righteous life unto the end. When the natural body also, by the operation of natural law, returns to dust, the soul is prepared to

enter that spiritual body which remains its home forever in the presence of the Lord.

This knowledge of natural law, especially as applied to our bodily life, is the real stronghold of a healthy spiritual life. By educating our senses, controlling our desires, and conforming our habits to the laws of nature, our bodily senses and our erratic passions will be easier maintained in a normal condition and co-operate with God in a willing and joyous service, instead of lashing us to an indulgence only restrained by fear of punishment. Service to God thus becomes a joy and rejoicing instead of a penal pressure here to escape a worse penalty hereafter. It is to enter heaven with opened-armed welcome instead of escaping hell by the skin of the teeth. Science, if received as the friend and ally of religion, will not hinder or obstruct its full development or intrude upon its spiritual domain. Science and the Bible are alike instruments to be employed in working out an onward progress for humanity, and religion should profit alike by each. It is wrangling with science which hurts religion, not co-operating with it.

New developments in science are not to be rejected, although they may conflict with an old theological creed; nor should an old or new creed of theology, however absurd or opposed to reason, disgust a scientist with religion. Thus perhaps

both in intellect and spirit we can walk with Paul to those higher mysteries which even Peter found it hard to understand.* A mere theological faith without knowledge is not true religion; such faith may be founded on error or it may be founded on truth. We all know men have died for falsehood and for truth with equal firmness. Paul assures us that he verily thought he did God service by persecuting Christians, and yet he suffered martyrdom for Christianity. As an illustration in this line of thought, we see that human instinct is not a safe guide to action in our natural bodies, but when, as in human nature, an intelligence has been added to the animal structure, and the intelligence is a connecting-link between the natural body and the spiritual body, we may trust knowledge and understanding to control the natural body as the profitable basis for a spiritual dwelling-place on earth. The spirit is then left to act according to its laws and commune with God.

The instinct of a brute mother is a safe guide in nursing her young, and the brute acts, as it were, conscientiously, according to her instincts; but the instinct of a human mother is not a safe guide, and to her is given an intelligence to care for its more artificial condition of life.

* II. Peter iii. 16.

Alas! the human mother often manifests less sense than the brute, for she fails to nurse her child and fit it to live according to its human environment, but nurses it and trains it without the proper exercise of human intelligence, and with less than animal instinct.

The only wonder is that humanity with such training is not totally depraved both in body and soul. The soul reaches to God on the one side and humanity on the other, but without aid from intelligence there is but emotion and erratic sensibility, which are no safer guides to a spiritual faith than blind instinct is to guide in parental duties of a temporal nature. An enlightened spiritual development can only be reached by association with enlightened intellectual development.

It is this union of common-sense with religion, knowledge, and spirituality that has developed and given permanence to true religion among men; enabled it to conquer corruption and ignorance; and justifies the hope that in spite of every hindrance the knowledge of God will yet rule the earth, and the love of God guide the affections of men. Creeds in their day deemed essential to religion have been again and again swept away by other creeds; but the purging away of the dross, in the long-run, is for the building up of a better faith. Knowledge has often been partially obscured in the wreck of nations,

but has ever risen to new life, unless restrained by superstition and bigotry.

With the word of God read understandingly, and the works and ways of God studied scientifically, and the intelligent use of both in a right life, we may hope to understand the harmony of God in all His ways, the wisdom of God in all His works, His loving-kindness and tender mercy to all His creatures.

With such a religion we may obey the word of the Psalmist and "Tell it to the generations following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death." *

* Psalm xlviii. 13, 14.

CHAPTER VI.

DOGMAS AND ACTS OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

WE must also understand that the Bible alone, without an intelligent knowledge and application of its contents, is not a charm to maintain true religion.

The Romish Church possessed the Bible, and quoted its authority when they persecuted men for seeking knowledge outside of church teaching.

The Protestant Church of Geneva had the Bible, and professed to be guided by it when they burned Servetus. Calvin, a great church corner-stone since then, had the Bible, and taught it by authority when he furnished the testimony on which Servetus was condemned.

The English Church had the Bible, and used it to burn John Rogers and one thousand others.

The Congregational Council at Indian Orchard, Mass., the Dutch Reformed Classis of New York, the Presbyterian Synod of New Jersey, and the General Assembly of the United States had the Bible, and used it to silence ministers from preaching heresy.

Each one of these representative bodies, within

the last few years, has virtually affirmed that adhesion to a creed as established by church councils precedes the liberty taught by Christ.

It would be uncharitable to affirm that these representative bodies did not act conscientiously; thus it only remains to believe that they attached less importance to great central truths, as the basis of religion and religious work, than to dependent definitions as determined by men. The central truth of religion is to obey and serve God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself," is the summary of Christ.* "This do, and thou shalt live." The minor and dependent condition to this central duty is the mode of performing it, and the only means of determining this mode is by the intelligent exercise of an enlightened judgment, which must necessarily be flexible and adapted to the changing conditions of society and the advance to a higher civilization. A true devotion to great central truths cannot persecute brethren for opinion's sake on minor matters, or refuse Christian fellowship to others by giving more importance to the doctrines of men than to the fundamental truths of God as interpreted by Christ or revealed in nature. The-

* Luke x. 27.

ology is a human outgrowth of religion and not its divine essence. Whenever it sets bounds to free inquiry it becomes a hindrance instead of a help to the spread of truth. When theology shuts the Bible out from all intellectual discussion and rejects the scientific study of nature as inimical to true faith, it is worse than idolatry.

A theology having rejected individual liberty almost invariably abuses the Bible itself, by perverting its teachings, yet claiming it as authority for acts contrary to its entire spirit. Prosecution and even persecution have been time and again defended by such texts as Romans xvi. 16, 17; I. Cor. v. 5, 11, 16; Matt. xviii. 17; II. John 10; I. Timothy i. 20; Gal. i. 8; Titus ii. 10. It was Jewish theology quoting Moses that crucified Christ; it was Saul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, who hunted the followers of Christ from city to city. Churches quoting both Paul and Christ since that time have persecuted uncounted souls to death for opinion's sake, whose cries and groans have come all along the ages to our ears. These churches profess to believe the Bible, but, alas! they also profess to believe the church as the appointed custodian not only of God's knowledge and grace, but also of His judgments.

By suppressing intelligence the Romish Church developed, or rather assumed, a power over men's souls until the Bible became a closed book, and the

free grace of God an article of traffic. Compared with such an abuse of divine worship, the practices of Moloch were mercy and loving-kindness. It is a religion of hate instead of love, persecution instead of mercy, judgment instead of justice ; beginning by professing to hate sin, it developed by hating everything as sin which was not orthodox, and ended by hating and persecuting every one of a different faith. Religion controlled by intelligence is, on the contrary, usually a religion of charity. Nor will such a religion suffer from perverts and backsliders, as a church built up on emotional enthusiasm.

Theology without knowledge dictates ; science, even without religion, investigates, and certainly never discourages the most free examination of every assertion and theory. Practically the basis of theology is too often the idea that everything is known, whereas the basis of all scientific study is that there is more to be acquired. A theology thus perfect naturally discards further study, and almost as naturally sneers at scientific men who believe study necessary. This sneering at the study of nature as seen in the flowers of earth, the stars of heaven, and in material things generally, appears to be at present a substitute for the older practice of burning books of science and the men who wrote them, but which is now forbidden by advancing civilization.

This practice of suppressing science to uphold a

church and the authority of its priesthood is by no means a peculiarity of the Christian church. It has ever been a weapon of human weakness when holding temporal power, and is incidental to all forms of worship. Caliph Omar, it is said, burned the Alexandrian library because, as he affirmed, the Koran contained all that was worth knowing. If these books agreed with the Koran, they were superfluous; and if they differed from it, they were dangerous and must be destroyed. On the same principle the Christian crusaders five hundred years afterwards burned the library at Tripoli, on a campaign to recover the sepulchre of Jesus, because the library was a repository of Arabian literature.

Some five hundred years later Cardinal Ximenes burned eighty thousand manuscripts, all the Arabian literature he could collect, in Granada; and nearly all the surviving literature of the Aztecs—mountains of manuscript, it is said—was burned by the first archbishop of Mexico. In each case the persecution of men accompanied the destruction of sacred literature. The same principle that burned books to suppress profane knowledge killed men to convert their souls. This has not been peculiar to one age any more than confined to one church. Paul excommunicated Alexander and Hymenæus and delivered them over to Satan on a question of faith,*

* I. Timothy i. 20.

a practice most assiduously followed by almost every prominent church since. It must, however, always be remembered that while Paul was intolerant to schismatics in the church, he was ever liberal to all who were ignorant and would seek a better understanding. Whether Paul was right or wrong in punishing heretical teachers in the church, he is undoubtedly an authority for church councils in punishing recalcitrant clerics. This church discipline to correct schism caused by voluntary members is quite different from that exercise of authority which suppresses thought and conscience as well as teaching, destroys literature already acquired, and tortures men who owe no voluntary obedience to the church except that which it has usurped and exercises because it has the power to do so unpunished.

It was but a little while after Constantine adopted the cross of Christ as the imperial standard of Rome, that Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, burnt the great Serapian library collected by the Ptolemies, which had escaped the conflagration of Cæsar's conquest, A.D. 391. Not long after this the nephew and successor of Theophilus, St. Cyril, and a mob of monks seized Hypatia the mathematician as she repaired to the academy where she taught geometry, mathematics, and philosophy. After stripping her naked in the streets, they killed her with clubs, mutilated her body and burned the fragments. Hypatia

was a beautiful woman of unquestioned virtue, personal purity, and piety. Her lecture-room was crowded with the best intelligence of Alexandria. But she disputed the authority of priestcraft, and taught the newer Platonic philosophy instead of worshipping the Virgin Mary. The spirit thus manifested in the early church has continued more or less active to the present day. If the primitive church at Jerusalem was persecuted by Jewish priestcraft and cruelty, the successors of that church have more than retaliated the wrong. Through all succeeding ages the mournful wail of the oppressed Jew has been heard, as plaintive and despairing throughout Christendom as it was by the rivers of Babylon. The enfranchisement of the Jew from the Christian's curse is but a recent event, and even yet the conscientious followers of Moses meet no Christian fellowship in any land. I know it is denied that St. Cyril instigated the murder of Hypatia. There can be no doubt that he did nothing to punish it, or that he instituted similar persecution of the Jews, or that he sanctioned the murder of Orestes, a Christian prefect, or that the dominant creeds of the churches have in some form more or less severe held it a virtue to oppose scientific study, and too often persecuted those who resisted their authority in this matter. Five hundred years before Christ, heathen Athens exiled Anaxagoras for teaching that the sun was not

the god Apollo, but a globe of fire, and an eclipse of its light but the shadow of a passing planet instead of Apollo's frown. Sixteen hundred years after Christ, the philosopher Bruno was burned at Rome as an atheist for asserting that the heavenly bodies were regulated by law, which was denied by the church, then claiming to embody and represent the Christian intelligence and authority of the age. Bruno was respected in every school of Europe ; he had been the welcome guest of Sir Philip Sidney ; was a critic of Shakespeare, and warm admirer of Luther ; yet he was expelled as a heretic from Geneva and burned at Rome. Only within a few years a suitable epitaph has been permitted on his tomb. It was the church then dominant, which claimed to be the depository of all knowledge and the almoner of all grace, that thus forbade the exercise of free thought and study of God's laws, whether in the material or spiritual world. It was this arrant ignorance and crass theology dominant as religious truth that enabled a hierarchy professing peace on earth and good-will toward men to burn a philosopher it could not silence, to suppress the discoveries of Copernicus, and silence Galileo by impending torture.

It is estimated by an orthodox commentator (Barnes) that more than fifty millions of men, women, and children have been sacrificed by the church of Christ during its temporal dominance, as

victims to a disputed faith. We are filled with horror when we read of fanatics in Dahomey or India being voluntarily but ignorantly sacrificed to honor a false religion, which, after all, must be more acceptable to God than this Moloch of sacrifice to maintain the new dispensation.

It was not Rome alone which thus denounced free thought and persecuted men. Luther also denounced Copernicus as an upstart astrologer, and the mild Melancthon stigmatized all who held to the heliocentric law of nature as utter reprobates. Calvin, Wesley, and others of less note and later date, denounced this law as atheistic and opposed to Bible truth. It is now well established that soon after the death of Luther (1540) Servetus was burned in Protestant Geneva for heresy, and Calvin furnished the evidence on which he was condemned. Melancthon approved the execution, but favored an easier death than by fire. Such facts show that ignorance persecuting intelligence was not a spasmodic necessity of statecraft, but a dogma of the church itself.

It is but two or three centuries since increased knowledge of the laws of life released the Christian church from the shame and sin of burning, drowning, and hanging men, women, and children on pretence of witchcraft or selling their souls to Satan by bloody compact.

These executions prevailed in America and

throughout Europe. Faith in these demoniacal possessions was as much a belief in the Christian church as it is now in pagan lands.

This belief in witchcraft, though an offspring of ignorance, was retained in the church by religious delusions, and became a part of religious faith, even when civil authority was called in to execute the will of misguided fanatics. It was like the high-priest calling in Pilate as a better instrumentality to execute a sentence already determined.

In Scotland these executions were managed by the Holy Kirk, which, though forbidding marriage on Sunday as a sacrilege, burned witches on that day as acceptable service.

After fifteen hundred years of Christian influence, men were tried on the most ridiculous pretences; men, women, and children were condemned, on testimony, and executed as being confederates with the devil, to obtain power to bedevilize others.

In the year A.D. 1516 five hundred persons were burned at Geneva in four months for witchcraft.

In and near A.D. 1524 over one thousand were burned in the diocese of Como.

In A.D. 1520 over twelve hundred were put to death in France.

From 1580 to 1595 nine hundred perished in Lorraine; from 1627 to 1629, one hundred and fifty-

seven in Wurzburg, and thirty out of a population of six hundred at Lindheim.

About this time a horse which had been taught tricks by his master was arrested and tried by the Inquisition in Lisbon as being possessed of a devil, and, having been found guilty, was burned.

Thus while the pope was burning Bruno at Rome for knowing too much of God, his satellites were burning a horse at Lisbon for knowing too much of Satan.

It is well known that papal edicts have been issued against rats, flies, locusts, and other creatures which came in swarms to threaten serious damage.*

In A.D. 1120 the bishop of Laon (France) pronounced an injunction against caterpillars and field-mice after a regular trial.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century there are numerous examples of proceedings against hogs which had devoured children.

Full details of a trial of this kind in 1494 exist, wherein is set forth that the hog was duly sentenced and strangled on a gibbet.

In 1497 a sow was tried and condemned to be beaten to death for having eaten off the chin of a child in the village of Charonne.

* See, for trials of hogs, mice, locusts, etc., *Popular Science Monthly*, vol. xvii. p. 621.

The execution of these animals was public and solemn : sometimes they were clothed like men.

In 1386 the judge at Falaise condemned a sow to be mutilated in the leg and head, and afterward hung.

Bulls were also condemned to the same fate.

In 1587 law proceedings were instituted against a beetle that made great ravages in the vineyard of St. Julien.

These insects first appeared in 1545, and the court proceedings began ; but, for a wonder, the beetles disappeared, and the suit was abandoned.

When, however, they re-appeared, forty-two years after, the suit was resumed and continued for some time, with several ridiculous episodes, demurrers, etc., common in civil suits : one of which was that no process of expulsion could be issued in favor of any parish until all tithings due to the church were paid.

About 1221 to 1229 the bishop of Lausanne ordered the eels of Lake Lemman to confine themselves to a certain part of the lake.

In one case of offending leeches a number were brought into court to hear their sentence read.

A history of the Swiss reformation, by De Ruchat, describes the trial of cockchafers in Lausanne, in which, the counsel for the cockchafers not appearing, the case went by default, and the insects were

excommunicated in the name of the Holy Trinity and of the Blessed Virgin.

The same author relates another case wherein a miraculous image was witness against a pig, which was accordingly sentenced and killed.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century birds of prey, and, in one instance, superabundant doves, were excommunicated in Canada.

If these details of inquisition on animals and insects, which might be greatly extended, were not well authenticated, they would be too ridiculous to believe as the theology of a church dominant for from twelve to fifteen hundred years after Christ.

But these sad details of superstition are but a faint background to the sadder and far more prevalent details of persecuting immortal men.

It is estimated that over one hundred thousand human beings were executed for witchcraft in Germany, mostly by burning.

In 1562 a statute of Queen Elizabeth declared it a crime to be *possessed*, whether others were injured thereby or not.

In 1634 a priest was burned in London for bewitching all of the nuns in a nunnery.

In 1654 twenty women were put to death as witches in Bretagne.

In 1775 nine old women were burned in Kalish (Poland) for bewitching the lands and crops, causing

famine, on the same authority by which David, over three thousand years before, hung the descendants of Saul for causing famine in Judah.

The same Bible used in this nineteenth century to unpulpit ministers and unchurch members of churches for heresy was used in like manner in the seventeenth century to burn witches.

As late as 1640, during the Long Parliament, over three thousand people were executed for sorcery.

The Pilgrim Fathers had but recently settled on the shores of America, to enjoy their own religious liberty, when they began to rule all men and things with a theological rod.

In less than fifty years one hundred and fifty persons, mostly women and children, were imprisoned in one town in Massachusetts for practising witchery.

Twenty-seven were condemned to death after torture or imprisonment, by confession, and others, after denial, on proof.

In September, 1863, a poor old Frenchman died in consequence of having been ducked as a wizard at Castle Hedingham, Essex, England.

In all these cases carried to final execution the persecutors could plead the inspired law of Moses; but while they obeyed the letter of the law as to killing,* they violated the law as to the mode of killing.

* Exodus xxii. 18.

The law of Moses directed that witches should be stoned,* whereas the new dispensation preferred hanging or drowning, but mostly burning.

The Bible text "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" has condemned hundreds of thousands to a cruel and brutal death; yet when the Hindoo widow, on similar authority of the Vedic scripture (though even here the authority is mistaken), performed the solemn duty of self-sacrifice by suttee, the church of Christianity cries out, "Pagan barbarity!" though the Hindoo widow is a voluntary offering to a mistaken devotion, while the witch is the compelled martyr to church ignorance and arrogance.

The woman of Endor was a witch, and Samuel a ghost at her bidding. Thus naturally from a perversion of Bible latitude innocent ghosts held their place in public and religious esteem long after the barbarism of witchcraft was cast aside. The early reformers generally believed in ghosts. It was science, not theology or Bible, which finally broke the delusion. John Wesley, Adam Clark, Richard Watson, and others believed in ghosts as mediums of communication with and visible to mortals. Wesley relates three instances in his own experience of warnings received. The vision of Luther is well known. Almost two centuries after the Reformation Balthasar

* Leviticus xx. 27.

Bakker of Amsterdam (1691-94) was dismissed from his post by the ecclesiastical authorities for publishing a work to root out the superstitious belief in witches, enchantment, etc., by which so many lives were being sacrificed, three millions being the estimate of the number of persons burned for that offence. It is in consistent keeping with such folly and wickedness that while the church was burning witches as voluntary confederates with the father of lies, they received the confessions and placed entire confidence in the testimony of these same witches to implicate others, even when extorted by torture or warped by insanity.

Bad as the Mosaic law was, the church made a horrid abuse of it. The law of Moses was but a civil law relating to open magic and witchery voluntarily practised to delude the people and incite rebellion against the inspired rules of Moses, and as superior to accepted rules of law and government; but the modern church perverted this law of civil order to a bigoted and intolerant church oppression.

When these abuses ceased in the church, it was not because the church ever formally abandoned its position or repented of its error, but because of growing intelligence among the people.

When scientific culture thus relieved religion of this burden, theology trembled lest faith in the Bible and all divine inspiration should go with it.

Witchcraft died a natural death in spite of a perverted Bible enforced by a bigoted and barbarous theology.

Is the true Bible revered any less because it ceases to be authority for burning the devil out of human bodies?

Will it be revered any less when it ceases to be authority for hunting heresy as a church duty, and for delivering souls over to the uncovenanted mercies of excommunicated culprits?

No man can estimate the damage done true religion not only by killing men, women, and children as a punishment for heresy, but also by condemning as a crime that true development of soul and spirit which can only come of intelligent study.

Who is there among the many theologians now quoting the Bible to punish intellectual heresy, would dare to quote it now to punish witchcraft with death?

Yet the same theology which claimed divine authority to slay witches is that which now claims like authority to excommunicate souls.

It is but a few years since the same theology, on divine authority, defended slavery in the United States.

Four millions of human beings were thus bred like cattle, raised and worked like cattle, under a system which declared that to teach them even to read or write was a crime.

The utter selfishness of the system, its rebellion against civil government as well as moral, finally caused its suppression, and not church influence.

The outraged sentiment of modern civilization, expressed largely by men called by the church atheists and unbelievers, and not the church itself, and with but little of the church's formal assistance, put an end to the dogma of Noah's curse on Canaan because Ham exposed his drunken indecency.

How many of these same theologians who defended slavery—a barbarism even in heathen lands—and were converted to liberty by the logic of events rather than by intelligent conviction, dare now to quote the Bible to defend slavery?

Yet how few of them, notwithstanding this impressive lesson of their own fallibility and wickedness, have since that refrained from the same hardness of treatment toward heretics which they before practised toward abolitionists?

In regard to witchcraft and anti-slavery, if they were great crimes against men and great and growing sins in the church, they were practical evils and there was some reason in suppressing them, though even here the religion of Jesus would question the mode of doing it.

If one person by mere witchery could imperil the health and life of another, then that one must be restrained.

The question went back to the actual fact of possession, and this was settled by a bigoted theology, until growing intelligence put a stop to it and demonstrated that witchcraft itself was but an ignorant superstition.

If abolition interfered with men's vested rights, and by discussion perilled their lives, then it was necessary for a free government to suppress abolition. The real question was, first, in the right of one man to enslave another, and no chicanery of law or revelation of faith could omit the consideration of this right in punishing any infringement of it, any more than a thief can complain of means used to recover goods which he has stolen.

These hecatombs, aye, myriads of victims sacrificed to suppress witchcraft and support slavery were sacrificed by slavish church tolerance on the one hand and bigoted intolerance on the other.

Thus in these and a multitude of other cases has theology obstructed the progress it should have promoted, while scientific study in all of its positive results has promoted religion.

Less than fifty years ago, in the Christian land of the Puritans, women and children were persecuted on account of their color, and those were persecuted who endeavored to educate them to a better condition.

In 1832 Prudence Crandall attempted to found a

boarding-school for colored girls in Connecticut, and both teacher and pupils were insulted in the streets, mobbed in the school-house, and the teacher was finally forbidden by the trustees of a Christian church to enter its doors.

The school was finally broken up as effectually and about as brutally as it would have been in the Southern States.

It is sheer absurdity as well as arrant oppression to claim religious authority or inspired guidance for churches which thus persecute schools for educating the ignorant. It is hard to believe them even honest however ignorant, though even ignorant honesty is no excuse for suppressing knowledge or substituting a self-satisfied phariseism for the Bible itself as a limit to progress in intellectual or spiritual life.

The Romish Church to-day outnumbers all of the other sects, is opposed to all Bible study in schools or out of them except as supervised by her own priests, and it is only as compelled by public sentiment that schools are tolerated even under its own control.

Such facts teach us that the Bible alone, at least in the fifty millions of the Romish Church, does not spiritualize a brutal instinct, and that even Bible truth must touch our reason before it can influence our life.

It might be safely affirmed that a dominant

church has ever existed opposing progress, and that Spain, in her religious conquests, barbarously exterminated a better civilization than she substituted, a better civilization than then existed in Europe.

Had the theology of Spain profited by that civilization instead of crushing it out, the religion of Jesus might have averted that fearful holocaust of crime, which, though committed in the name of Christ, surpassed all previous experience in cruelty.

If Mexico and Peru offered human victims, it was in loving devotion to the deity they worshipped: the victim was a willing offering, or, if forced, it was a prisoner of war saved from death for sacrifice.

In neither case was there bitter abuse, excommunication from covenanted mercies, or a slow death by torture, to gratify a demoniacal spirit.

In Catholic Europe like sacrifices were offered to God, not in devotion, but to gratify the most fiendish passions and to perpetuate the rule of tyrannical power.

To accomplish this the screw, rack, and every torture of savage ingenuity were but private preludes to the great auto-da-fé, which was a public spectacle to a brutal populace professing the religion of Christ.

After nearly two thousand years of progress, the "Index Expurgationes" is the codex of that religion which burned Savonarola and Bruno, while cate-

chisms and confessions are the finality of the religion which burned Servetus in Geneva, John Smith in England, and witches in America less than two hundred years ago.

Thus we see that the Bible alone did not save the Jew from the crime of persecution. The Koran, though not at first employed as a physical power, did not save the Moslem from the use of his scimeter when he, like the Jew, came to regard the earth and the heavens as his peculiar heritage.

The Old and New Testament together did not save the church from violence and persecution when it assumed to be the sole custodian of religious rights, and inspired to interpret the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and denied to others that privilege of free thought which was made by God in nature, and finally by God in Christ, the common inheritance of every soul.

The history of past religious organizations of any prominence, based upon religious creeds, has been a history of persecution, just in proportion to the restraint imposed by those creeds and practices upon free thought and intellectual development.

A priesthood or council assuming a spiritual authority to administer the ordinances of religion sooner or later assumes to control as well as to administer or refuse them to others, by declaring *ex cathedra* rules of church privilege.

Under such a system the enjoyment of religious ordinances as a right ceases.

Even the sacraments given by Christ as a free gift from God are forbidden except as allowed by a self-constituted authority, and often by self-elected officers, who thus constitute themselves arbiters of God's grace and judges of men's souls.

The spectacle of an intelligent man or woman applying for permission to make an open profession of faith and to honor God in proper ordinances being held back while the application is being discussed, and then such applicant being compelled to go before church officers often unfit for such an office, and there to be catechized, voted upon, and finally adjudged as to the soul's inner experience, is a spectacle more befitting the days of Torquemada and the Inquisition than the nineteenth century of synods and councils.

That a child eight or ten years old can explain its views intelligently, or intelligently accept or understand the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation, or Vicarious Atonement and other church requirements, is an absurdity.

To require a profession of such belief is to teach hypocrisy and self-righteousness as the first step to a public confession of faith.

It was not thus the Saviour took little children in his arms and blessed them.

It was not thus he instructed the elders when he said to them, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Christ says, "*I* am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Theology says, "*I* am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary, and I will give you rest."

Theology says, "Come and be examined, and if worthy I will give you rest."

Christ says, "Believe in me and ye shall be saved."

Theology says, "Believe in *me* and ye shall be saved."

The orthodox minister preaches from the pulpit, "Come to Jesus; come now; come just as you are; come with your guilt and sin oppressed;" but he closes the exhortation with a notice to meet the church officials at a stated time and be examined in theology.

As before remarked, church creeds and rules would all be well enough if used for the intelligent development of co-operating Christians, or the enlisting of the careless and thoughtless in church work; but when creeds and confessions are made essential to a public profession of Christ, and used as closed bars instead of open gates to God's sanctuary, they become taskmasters instead of school-

masters and compel men to "make bricks without straw."

The human heart is still deceitful above all things, and theology without love, or a church without understanding, now, is the same law without judgment, mercy, or justice which stoned Stephen nearly two thousand years ago.

The same bigotry that led Saul of Tarsus to persecute men, women, and children, because they were Christians, also delivered Hymenæus and Alexander to Satan, because they were heretics.*

The same church and human nature, unrestrained by intelligent religion, that first tortured and then sacrificed human beings for heresy, as an acceptable service to God, all along the ages, would do the same now if it had the power. It is the advancement of science and the diffusion of knowledge among the people which has so greatly retrieved the Christian church from demoniacal possessions.

It may be perfectly true that science is not religion, but it is equally true that knowledge and expansion of mind does fit man for a higher intuition of God, and the contracted theology which ejects men from the following of Christ for heresy now is precisely the same theology that burned men for heresy during the mediæval ages.

* I. Timothy i. 20.

In the cure of such evils a growing intelligence must be allowed to act as a renewed inspiration. Thus many sinful things, once allowed because of the hardness of men's hearts, will be eliminated under the influence of better intelligence and freedom of religious thought. Thus, garments dripping with the blood of the saints have been stripped from the church, and religion appearing in more beautiful array is the evangel of a new hope. The rack and stake are no longer handmaidens of Christ. Witchcraft is no longer a question for church surveillance, demoniacal possession is no longer adjudicated in church councils, and, with at least half the church professing the same God and Saviour, relics and priestly charms have ceased to be a stock in the trade of souls.

The leaven of theological rule, however, still ferments in the church. Man is still human, and Christianity has not as yet succeeded in discarding its selfishness or in fully profiting by its spiritual and intellectual parts. The lower elements of human nature are still nurtured as religious guides. The higher elements of the spirit, seeking liberty in Christ, are yet trammelled by traditions of men. While honest inquirers after God in Christ are forbidden His feast until they subscribe to a creed of many mysteries. By a law of our nature, such a course constantly repels intelligent member-

ship from church organizations, and encourages zeal without knowledge as a controlling element of organization and work, when this zeal without knowledge is promoted to government.

An office in the church stirs up strife, and from time to time ferments the leaven of self-righteousness, and magnifies heresy into a spiritual goblin to frighten the souls of men, though it has no longer the power to roast their bodies. That this is true is seen in the open parade of this mediæval church goblin in trials for heresy, even on points of belief about which the most learned and righteous men have differed, from the time Paul withstood Peter at Antioch, or Peter and John rebaptized the disciples of Philip of Cæsarea. The names of such men as Barnes, West, Tyng, Blauvelt, McCune, Cree, Swing, Miller, are familiar to this generation, and but a tithing of the offering up of religion to theology in our own day.

It cannot, therefore, be denied that a narrow and proscriptive theology is a prominent, often a controlling, element in almost every branch of the Protestant Church. Thus it not only excludes men from the enjoyment of the privilege secured by Christ and sealed with his blood, but excommunicates righteous men for an honest change of doctrine made on prayerful examination.

The punishment in these and similar cases not

mentioned was all that the State laws of this nineteenth-century civilization would permit, and in the case of Blauvelt, condemned by the Dutch Reformed Classis of New York, there was a parting blow given to his expulsion by calling him a traitor to Christ, as well as a heretic to the Dutch Reformed faith. The spirit that would torture the soul of the conscientious, useful minister of the gospel, by proclaiming him to the world as a traitor to Christ, would have tortured his body as well, but for the law of a better humanity restraining them. Ah, no, Copernicus, Galileo, Bruno, Savonarola, Servetus, Huss, Luther, Cranmer, Latimer, are not the only representative names which bring proof of a church ruling without charity, or a theology without mercy. The world moves on: the faults of a passing age are ever beacon-lights of warning to the ages yet to come. The lash of scorpions in the mediæval church is but the lash of tongues in the church of to-day. The Maranatha of the greater excommunication has given way to the Anathema of the lesser. We may fondly hope that intelligence will continue to spread among the people, and new light will dawn to enlighten the mind. Then will the Bible be better read, and in the light of reason be better understood. Then will the gospel be a call of glad tidings to the mercy-seat of Christ, instead of a summons to the judgment hall of Caiaphas and Pilate. God will at last rescue His jewels and set them in

crowns for His kingdom. The ashes of martyrs will be gathered, the excommunicant will be restored, and their heresy will be the heritage of a better harvest. Statues of Galileo, Bruno, Savonarola, Servetus, Huss, and Luther will stand grouped with other men of honor, as tribute to both science and religion, under the dome of St. Peter's at Rome.

Then, too, the mantle of charity will cover the Synod of New Jersey, the Episcopal diocese, the Dutch Reformed Classis of New York, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, for it will rest on the tombless grave of a dead theology. Then even the "pretty flowers" and "pretty stars" will teach, unrebuked, their lesson of love to God and brotherhood to man. For the flowers will bloom and the stars will shine on forever, as the sun itself shines and the rain falls alike on the just and the unjust, as everlasting witnesses of God's untiring mercy and unending love to the children of men, even while yet sinners in His sight.

Then will come to pass the prophetic psalm of the sweet singer of Israel: "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"*

* Ps. viii.

CHAPTER VII.

MOSES AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

IF we were still inclined to question the necessity of a scientific knowledge of things as a Christian virtue, the Bible itself would answer the question, for from Genesis to Revelation the sacred Scriptures enjoin men to study the works and ways of God. This study men call science. When Christ said, "Search the Scriptures," it was in direct contrast to, and in correction of, the prevailing theology, which was based upon the traditions of men, and the rabbinical and priestly interpretation thereof. It was an appeal from human to divine teaching, from a priestly to a personal application. When Moses called the congregation of Israel before the mountain to hear what God would say, it was an entire reform upon the worship of Egypt, the literature and learning of which was a mystery to the people, and only explained by the priest as suited his purpose. Moses reversed all this: required the people to be taught in all their cities; reserved for the priesthood only the ordering of the tabernacle and temple services. The great truths of religion were revealed to all the people. In carrying

out this revelation, in forcing a purely monotheistic worship, he enjoined historical study by requiring them constantly to recall all God's dealing with them, the bondage from which He delivered them; not only this, but all previous history. The injunction was, "Remember the days of old, consider the generations of generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people." *

Moses was skilled in the learning of Egypt, and unless we impeach the wisdom of God we must admit that he was thus better fitted to be a leader of Israel and the founder of a new confederacy. He tells the people that all things in heaven and upon the earth are of one God: the wonders performed in Egypt, the walled-up waters of the sea which permitted His people to pass over, and the returning waves which overwhelmed the pursuing enemies, were by the breath of His nostril; the daily manna to feed them, the ever-flowing water to refresh them, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to guide them, were but the present manifestations of that omnipotent Jehovah who had re-

* Deut. xxxii., 7, 8.

vealed Him in mercy from the beginning of time. Isaiah tells us that "God sitteth upon the circle of the earth." "He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain," and through ignorance of these things nations perish. "They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot save." *

Amos the prophet, in comforting the stricken people, refers them to the wonderful works of God, and illustrates His power and continuance by the Pleiades and Orion as proofs of universal goodness.

How many theologians of to-day, while speaking lightly of astronomical science, could explain the application or force of this beautiful figure by the shepherd-prophet of Tekoa?

"For, lo, He that formeth the mountains and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is His thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name." †

The Bible itself furnishes an example of the earliest instruction in mere scientific details of human art. Passing the beautiful order of creation, after which "the Lord God made coats of skins" for Adam and Eve, we find the science of music a matter of

* Isaiah xl. 22; Amos v. 8; Isaiah xlv. 20.

† Amos iv. 13.

record: the name of Jubal preserved as the inventor of the organ, whose swelling notes still sound the Creator's praise in the sanctuary.

The harp, afterward so sweetly tuned by David's hand, is still the human emblem of angelic praise.

Tubal Cain was not only a worker but an "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." After this, when God directed Noah to build the ark, He said unto him, "This is the fashion thou shalt build it," and the fashion as given was a scientific plan adapted to the purpose. Bezaleel and Aholiab, who erected the tabernacle and made all the vessels and ornaments for decoration and worship, were the first-mentioned sculptors of repute, and their excellence is recorded by Moses as the gift of God.* They not only designed cunning work in gold, in silver, in brass, the setting and cutting of stones, the carving of wood, but they executed the finest of their own designs. They designed the tabernacle of the congregation, the ark of the testimony, the mercy-seat, the candlestick, the altars of burnt-offering and incense, and all the furniture thereof, the cloth of services and all embroideries, the holy garments of Aaron and his sons, the oil in the incense.

In later times, when the wanderings of Israel were ended and a permanent place of worship was re-

* Exodus xxxi. 3, xxxv. 35.

quired, the design was not left to ignorant blunders, but God Himself inspired the plans. He instructed David, we are told, in the pattern of the porch and houses thereof; the treasuries, the upper chambers, the inner parlors; the place of mercy-seat; the courses of the priests and Levites; the work of the service; the vessels of the service, the candlesticks, the lamps, the tables, the flesh-hooks, bowls, basins, and cups; the altar of incense and sacrifice; the spread wings of the cherubim and their chariot; the stone and timber for building; the gold, silver, jewels, and precious stones for ornament; the linen and wool for weaving and embroidery—everything for the temples and the service therein. All this David gave to Solomon as his last legacy, and said to him, “All this the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.”* Whether all this was given to David in the handwriting of the Lord, as he seems to say, or obtained by study, it was given to Solomon as information to know and understand, as applied to the divine worship and embracing a knowledge of architecture, designing, engraving, and almost every department of fine arts.

A careful study of the building of the Temple will develop among other details that it was finished

* I. Chron. xxviii. 19.

without debt before it was dedicated to the Lord. The Bible is full of collateral evidence, as well as specific instances independent of mere human reasoning, that God requires men everywhere to use and develop the intellect in every department of knowledge, and to do this as a part of the religion we profess. It is not enjoined that every man of education should be a scientist or every Christian should be a Pauline theologian; but if, as Solomon says, "the love of the Lord makes glad the understanding heart," let us get the understanding heart as the basis of love to the Lord.

In one sense it is also true, as stated by Solomon, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," but in the same sense we may affirm that the perfection of wisdom is the perfection of love. "A wise man will hear and will increase learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels."* When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee: to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, that thou mayest walk in the way of the good."† "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding: for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is

* Prov. i. 5.

† Prov. ii. 10, 11, 12, 20.

more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared to her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant, and her paths are peace.”* These lessons Solomon enforces by the further fact that God Himself “by wisdom has founded the earth, by understanding hath He established the heavens.”† That this wisdom and understanding is not merely a time-accomplishment He further teaches by such passages as, “He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul.”‡ This we know was the wisdom and understanding which Solomon chose for himself when the Lord appeared to him at Gideon and offered him the choice of blessings. With his choice the Lord was so well pleased that he promised to add also the lesser pleasures of the body, for which Solomon had not asked. Solomon asked for that understanding and knowledge we are all required to seek—a wisdom and knowledge to perform properly those duties which are required of us in our station in life. We do not want a self-satisfaction that whatever we do is well done; not a mere sensation, profanely called the inner experience, of a “higher life.” Either of these thrive better with ignorance; thrive only in man’s lower nature, where selfishness and self-conceit predominate. A mere

* Prov. iii. 13-17.

† Prov. iii. 19.

‡ Prov. xix. 8.

emotional experience without a proper foundation in real knowledge may encourage a false hope or an equally improper despair. The false hope is born of self-wrought emotion, and a wicked despair is born of the same parentage, and are alike derogatory to God's goodness, justice, and truth. The too frequent policy of preaching a religion above reason, on the basis of emotional experience, and rushing a sensational conversion through an excited community, as is too often done under the name of evangelistic work, is but a travesty of the religion taught by Moses for Christ, and but for the ignorance so often prominent would merit Carlyle's epithet of gospel dilettanteism. Enthusiasm is not knowledge, nor emotion understanding, even in religion: these are aids in their proper place, necessary helps, but alone are as blind guides to the way of life, and very likely become a stumbling-block both to Jew and Gentile. The study of wisdom here enjoined must not, however, be mistaken for that mere worldly wisdom which Solomon and prophets alike condemned in early ages of the church, or the craftiness and cunning of which Paul warned the Corinthian church in later days. Paul, writing to Timothy, meets this question precisely when he says, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust [that is, the gospel as given by Christ], avoiding vain babblings [that is, the mere

sensational notion of man], and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith." * It was not science he was to avoid, but *false* science, which, it seemed from this advice to Timothy, was a fault of preaching then as it is now.

* I. Timothy vi. 20.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BIBLE.

IN the acquisition of knowledge as here advocated, by studying the laws of nature, we are by no means to omit a like scientific study of the Bible; for, however men may differ as to the prophetic inspiration of the Bible, there can be no noteworthy objection to it as a reliable record of the evolution of the earliest known religion, and the civil history of a most important portion of the human race. As a record of what was known from age to age of manners, customs, government, religion, and science it is invaluable, but its value depends upon a scientific study of its entire contents and not a parrot-like repetition of selected texts. We are prone to forget that the Bible is not a single book but several books, written by different men living centuries apart, and these different books have been selected and compiled from a mass of manuscripts only in or near these last days, called the "fulness of time."

A knowledge of religion, therefore, either past or present is not to be had complete by reading any one book of the Bible, nor is any entire theology to be founded upon any one book. It is only by a

scientific study of the Bible as a whole we can generalize about religion or specify about creeds. To study the Bible scientifically requires collateral knowledge of the times, acquirements, customs, other facts of the age and people, of the different eras embraced in the record. This does not constitute the Bible a book of science or scientific authority as to ultimate facts not so specified, but the incidental mention of facts, if understood properly, is often a key to explain supposed difficulties and discrepancies which arise solely from ignorance and a false reverence for the mere verbiage of the Bible, as well as a false impression of what the Bible is intended to teach.

The Bible is not a book of geology, but those who scoff at geology as affirming an order of creation would do well to study their Bible without prejudice. The first chapter of Genesis, whether read as a general outline of creation or as a mere panoramic vision of events, is in its important and general succession the same as that given in geology.

The difference in detail is no more than will always exist where one description is incidental to the main object in view, and the other a specific study.

The object of the creation narrative in Genesis seems to be to reveal God as the Creator of all things, but especially to introduce man as the perfection of all created things and his relation spirit-

ually to God. To this end it is declared that at the first step everything was without form and void. This is the starting-point of the nebular theory.

2d. Darkness was upon the face of the deep. This is not disputed by speculative geology.

3d. Light was, and then light was divided from darkness. This also geology affirms.

4th. There was a firmament, an atmosphere, which divided the waters below from the waters above. Geology accepts this.

5th. The waters under the firmament were gathered together and dry land appeared. Geology accepts this order of events and calls it, as the Bible does, sea and land.

6th. The earth put forth grass, the herb yielding seed and the tree yielding fruit. This order is also assumed in almost every theory of vital development, and corresponds with the coal-forming period of science. The atmosphere, as yet loaded with carbon and thus unfit for animal or human life, was very fatness to the vast ferns and mosses, which grew like giants to the low clouds that bathed in kisses their spreading tops.

7th. The heat and light of the sun, that to ignorance might seem made for naught and wasting, through these æons of primeval time, before a living soul could enjoy the blessing, were thus absorbed in the profuse vegetation and stored as fossil coal, fit-

ting the earth for man, that he might not only enjoy the present heat and light, but also the heat and light of primeval ages.

As the next step in creative order, we are told, the sun, moon, and stars appeared, and were made signs for seasons, for days, and for years. This is also the period in which the geologist locates the direct and unimpeded influence of light upon the earth.

8th. The diffused light which appeared in the carbon- and vapor-loaded atmosphere has changed to clearer light and clouds of vapor. The proportion of constituent parts of the air have changed: the giant vegetation dwarfs; the carbon and vapor upon which it fattened have diminished; and the earth, air, and sea are now fitted to sustain not only vegetable but animal life, and the waters brought forth abundantly water fowl and moving creatures; the earth brought forth cattle, birds, and creeping things. Even Darwin or Wallace would make no objection to this order of events.

9th. Last of all man appeared, and by the super-added breath of the Almighty was made a living soul, to have dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea. And lo, even to the last geology and astronomy object not to the order!

The Bible narrative taken as a mere sketch, with-

out pretence of scientific accuracy of detail, is so scientific in its general order and so orderly in its progress as to establish beyond question that the author knew whereof he wrote, whether by scientific study or inspiration matters not. Science is but a form of inspiration.

Nor is there anything here or elsewhere in the Bible, unless interpreted by a perverse theology, that need to raise a single question of conflict between it and science. It was the perverse theology of the mediæval church and not the Bible that incited such bitter contention against Copernicus, Bruno, and Galileo. The general outline of creation as given in the Bible is, first, the creation of physical optical phenomena from a chaotic condition ; second, chemical changes ; third, vital ; fourth, rational.

This order of events would be admitted by the most extreme evolutionist. There is no necessity whatever of a religious discussion on details which do not affect our reverence for God or regard for our own souls. Nor do theologians themselves, who insist lustily on the six solar days of creation, observe the seventh day as such an interpretation demands.

If God really rested on the seventh day of the week, in commemoration of a completed creation, and commanded man so to observe it forever, no observance could be too sacred or severe. But we

well know that the day is not thus hallowed by a Christian in the land, however they may revile one who from honest belief keeps it but a trifle less ceremoniously but not less reverentially. One of our most accomplished Biblical scholars, Prof. Taylor Lewis (died 1877), writing as a champion of God's word as written in the Bible, and not in the least in advocacy of science, argued over twenty years ago that the language of Genesis "suggests the coming of one thing out of another," and in set terms opposes the Miltonian theory (six days of creation) as unscriptural and unreasonable. This was years before the word "evolution" was used by Spencer or Huxley, or "survival of the fittest," "natural selection," by Darwin and Wallace. The principle so often ridiculed in Darwin, that man may have descended, or rather ascended, from an inferior animal and become man by the addition or development of spirit, was held by an unyielding advocate of Bible inspiration as not at variance with the statements therein. Spontaneous generation even, a doctrine for a time held as nearly proven by the experiments of Cross, and since revived by Bastian ("The Beginnings of Life"), was thus spoken of after careful investigation by Prof. Lewis: "There is no impiety in the supposition that the divine Word which originated and gave law to animal life may have commenced its development with certain chem-

ical conditions which science may yet discover" ("Six Days of Creation"). Prof. Lewis did not accept the proof of spontaneous generation as sufficient, but saw nothing to object to either in the proposition or the experiments. Since then Pasteur, Huxley, and more notably Tyndall have clearly shown by elaborate and extended investigation that the doctrine of spontaneous generation is not proven, and the epithets of frightened theology are entirely wasted. It is an arrogant theology and not scientific study which puts a limit to the periods of creation or the power of God. The scientist seeks to learn times, seasons, and days, but cheerfully admits that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The Bible abounds in poetic measure, and is full of the poetic expression of fact as well as of imagination; but the Bible is not intended to teach poetic measure, and its poetic expression of fact must be interpreted accordingly.

The thousand and five songs of Solomon, the psalms of David and later writers, the vocal and instrumental music of the Temple, trained, as David tells us, not only with the heart, but with the "understanding also," have come down to us as examples of acceptable song, because thus trained and cultivated as well as truthful.

They are now types of praise and worship proper

to express an intelligent adoration, and will probably remain through all time as the types to man of that heavenly praise in which Christians hope to join, and whose anthem will swell louder and louder until the whole assembly of the redeemed shall join in unison.

The Bible is not a text-book of astronomy, but advanced astronomy reveals to us mighty mysteries faintly gleaming in Bible expression which to a narrow theology seemed unmeaning, but which in the light of science give significance to these words of David: "How wonderful are Thy works, and Thy ways past finding out!"

The successive discoveries in astronomy show how much all knowledge depends for its increase upon the studies of successive generations.

This should teach the most profound theologian that he cannot afford to decry the labors of science.

"For ages men saw the sun rise and set, and by past experience alone were assured of its daily return.

Nightly the stars looked forth from the quiet sky, minute in space, but mighty in mystery.

The inquiring astronomer on lonely plain or mountain-top gazed and pondered.

At last he noticed the sun moving among the stars, and the stars, too, moving in immeasurable space. Long observation confirmed his discovery, and he

communicated to his associates the wonders he had surmised.

He passes away, but his faithful follower takes his place and nightly stands in the silent vigils of the stars.

Soon he too passes away leaving another sentinel,"* and added information to the coming watches of the night.

Knowledge accumulates, and new resources aid new research.

A solitary tower is at length erected for better observation.

Soon, from plain and tower, from pyramid and mountain-top, an unbroken gaze is piercing deep into the dwelling-place of Deity.

The magic of priestly mummery, then as now, often mingles with and obscures the twilight of truthful dawn, but the devout astronomer continues his endless gaze.

Pythagoras at last catches glimpses of revolving worlds, and Venus and Mercury are supposed to revolve around the sun and not ahead in space.

The earth, even to unaided vision, is no longer the only centre of motion.

For two thousand years more, various discoveries were added, but the true centre of planetary motion baffled the closest scrutiny. Then came Copernicus,

* From a lecture delivered in Omaha some years ago.

after thirty years of toil and suspense, boldly abandoned the earth as a centre of motion, and, launching his thoughts forth through space, settled on the sun as the sure and only centre of planetary motion. Tycho Brahe collected a vast number of observations. Kepler reduced these to three great and beautiful laws, now known by his name. Newton by the law of gravitation gave life to these researches of the past, and by the application of the more fundamental laws of mechanics and mathematics gave a firm basis to physical astronomy. Galileo, Halley, Herschel, and our own Mitchell are but a few of the immortal names of the dead past who joined with sleepless eye the nightly watch of past ages. The galaxy of glorious students that now scan the heavens is too numerous to name, and their achievements too extensive to specify. But step by step new truths dawn, old conclusions are confirmed, instruments aid the eye, until at last is revealed the stupendous fact that other suns than ours with revolving planets form other systems, until suns and systems swarm the immensity of space. Stars no human eye can count for number are central suns to systems no telescopic eye can fathom; the lonely star-gazer of the oriental past has become the Argus-eyed astronomer of a thousand observatories. From the gathered observation of centuries at last comes up the stupendous and almost inconceivable statement that

moon and planet, planet and sun, sun and system, are sweeping onward through space at a rate of over six hundred millions of miles each year, and this calculation comes to us with such mathematical accuracy that there is but one chance in forty thousand of a mistake. Where does all this tend, and where will this matchless speed finally terminate? Here again the endless night of astronomical toil reveals the most sublime speculation ever attained by the human mind. To us, the inheritors of the garnered intellect of six thousand years, it is announced that this magnificent assemblage of worlds innumerable, this universe of blazing suns with their attendant satellites, ten thousand fiery comets, and millions of meteors, are not dashing on at this fearful speed to an awful wreck of matter, but are moving in obedience to the law of gravitation about a common centre. When this splendid cortege in the retinue of Jehovah's march shall have sped onward around the immense circumference of his course at the rate of some seventy thousand miles an hour for over eighteen millions of years, one revolution will be complete, the pendulum of creation will have swung once in the immensity of space, and the dial of the heavens will mark one second of created time in the eternity of God.

There was momentous meaning in the sublime challenge of the Almighty to Job, "Canst thou bind

the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" *

In view of such wonders revealed in the domain of science, and the fact that so many Christians are content with mere spiritual emotions, even assume such experience to be a sufficient guide to a knowledge of God, we see the pertinency of God's rebuke to Job and his friends—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding." †

Then follows the inimitable summary, almost a synopsis of modern physical science, a lecture in natural history: the earth and the foundations thereof; the sea and its depths and the foundations thereof; the clouds, spread as a garment over sea and earth; the springs of the sea; darkness as a swaddling-band; the dwelling-place of light and the parting thereof; the treasures of snow and hail; the wind blowing where it listeth; the pathway of lightning; the paternity of rain and dew; the dust of the earth growing into hardness, as clod and

* Job xxxviii. 31, 32.

† Job xxxviii. 2-4.

rock; the lion crouching for his prey; the goats breeding in the rocks; the wild ass ranging the mountains; the horse patient in work, but neighing at the battle; the eagle mounting towards the sun, but dwelling on the crag; the hawk with outstretched wings; the raven wandering for meat; the ostrich hiding its eggs in the sand; the plumage of the peacock; the feeding of the sparrow; the leviathan of the deep, with, as it were, smoke from his nostrils, to whom iron is as straw and brass as rotten wood; the strength of behemoth drinking up rivers. Explain these to me, O Job, "then will I confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee." * Here is a procession of utterances, almost as ancient as man himself, that may teach us, even in these latter days, a lesson of intellectual cultivation and spiritual humility.

Well might humbled Job confess, "I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." † Let us humble ourselves in dust and ashes, and arise not from our humiliation to make broad our phylacteries until, like David, we have considered His ways and can say with the publican, as well as Job, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner."

* Job xl. 14.

† Job xlii. 3, 6.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRAINING OF THE PROPHETS.

ACCORDING to orthodoxy, the early prophets were as nearly inspired, without study, as any teacher of spiritual things could hope to be now. Yet we find, as early as Moses, they were provided with regular instruction; colleges for the education of prophets were organized, probably before the time of Samuel, certainly in his time, at Bethel and Ramah.* In the days of Elijah and Elisha we read of colleges at Carmel, Bethel, Gilgal, Jericho, and probably at Ramah and elsewhere.†

Elijah was on a farewell visit to these colleges just before his death,‡ and Elisha on taking the place of Elijah visited and superintended them.§

That the students were numerous is evident from the fact that fifty of them went out from the school at Jericho to seek the body of Elijah. ||

Women were included in these schools, as we

* I. Samuel x. 5; also xix. 18.

† II. Kings ii. 3; also iv. 38; also vi. 1.

‡ II. Kings ii. 1-6.

§ II. Kings ii. 18-25.

|| II. Kings ii. 17.

learn of Hulda being a prophetess in the college at Jerusalem, though her husband was but a keeper of the wardrobe, probably of the priests.*

Miriam and Deborah, we know, were prophetesses before the time of Samuel. † The wife of Isaiah was a prophetess, ‡ and in New Testament times we read of Anna as a prophetess, who was also the traditional mother of the Virgin Mary. §

These collegiate schools probably ceased with the captivity, but synagogue-teaching took their place on the return from Babylon, being in one respect a radical reform, in that the synagogues, instead of nurturing a prophetic aristocracy, were intended to disseminate knowledge of the law among the people at large.

A rivalry or difference heretofore existing between the prophetic and priestly orders seems to have been compromised in the synagogue greatly to the advantage of the common people.

Here grew up Sadducees and Pharisees, as the remaining leaven of the old differences, but with the advantage to all that their discussions and disputes were before the people, and presupposed an education of the people, competent to judge the merits of the argument.

* II. Kings xxii. 14.

† Exodus xv. 20; Judges iv. 4.

‡ Isaiah viii. 3.

§ Luke ii. 36.

The Sadducees held to the written law and ceremonials, and in this respect represented the priesthood.

The Pharisees founded a spiritual and hidden meaning on unrecorded traditions, held to be more sacred than the written law, and transmitted from Moses by plenary inspiration of persons rather than of writings, which were only directions written out from time to time for common use, and did not contain the secret essence of a divine inspiration.

When the Pharisees were in the ascendancy these traditions became authority in religious belief and worship more than the written law.

Both scribes and Pharisees attached more importance to ceremonial service than to a religious life, for, as Christ declared to both scribes and Pharisees, they had made void the law of God by the traditions of men.*

Scribe and Pharisee, though professing to teach the people, did so as members of a privileged sect; it was on this ground that Christ denounced them as on a level with hypocrites.

The authority of the apostles as teachers for Christ was not founded upon inspiration, as is too often assumed, but upon the fact of their having been eye-witnesses of his acts and ear-witnesses of his words.

* Matthew xv. 6.

They were under the daily instruction of Christ during his whole ministry; heard his discussions with the lawyers, the scribes, and the Pharisees, where all that was either traditional or written was fully discussed.

I think it a great mistake to represent the apostles and early disciples of Christ as ignorant men, and it probably arose from the fact that they all had trades; but it was a Jewish custom that all men should acquire each one a trade, and we find Paul, though thoroughly educated, a tent-maker.

In the time of Christ every village of any size had its synagogue and parish school, where each twenty-five scholars must have a teacher.

These parish schools were independent of those of the scribes and Pharisees, lawyers and doctors, which were of higher grade, and among which the schools of Hillel and Shammai were at that time famous.

The disciples were undoubtedly educated in these parish schools, and the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, and James show an acquaintance with language and literature as the result of education, not revelation or fishing.

Their spiritual inspiration, especially after the death of Christ, developed their Christian character, but their fitness to witness for Christ or to proclaim his gospel was acquired by the daily teaching of

Christ himself and their previously acquired knowledge of the law, and sufficient intellectual development to apply their knowledge to the purpose for which they were called.

Paul, a great corner-stone of the Christian church, was skilled in Mosaic literature, as Moses, his great prototype, was skilled in the learning of Egypt.

Luke tells us that Moses "was mighty in words" * as well as deeds.

Stephen, we know, confounded the disputants of a dozen synagogues until they silenced him with stones.†

Philip taught the prime-minister of Queen Candace; ‡ the New Testament writers compare favorably with Paul, whose excellence in all literature is unquestioned.

Christianity thus represented boldly confronted and confounded not the ignorance but the best intelligence of both Jew and Gentile.

The triumph of Paul over Tertullus before Felix at Cæsarea was not greater than that of Peter, James, John, and Stephen at Jerusalem, when they met lawyers and rabbis of the Sanhedrim and synagogue and established a new faith on the ruins of old tradition.

At Antioch the faith won its baptismal name, and

* Acts vii. 22.

† Acts vii. 58.

‡ Acts viii. 27.

spread through Asia Minor to Africa and the islands of the sea so rapidly that before the first witness had ceased to bear living testimony the philosophy of Jew and Gentile had commenced a rapid retreat before the onward march of Christian faith.

Christ himself set no example of emotional experience alone as a guide for religious life or basis of religious faith.

He began his life as other children. At the age of twelve he went up to the Temple and assumed the obligations usual at that age; learned his trade and worked at it until by age and information he was prepared to enter upon his mission, to all human appearance as other men.

Then his warrant for the truth of his doctrine was, "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." * "He doeth the works." †

The quotations of Christ from the Greek version of the Hebrew scripture showed his familiarity with the written word; his discussions with the Pharisees revealed a perfect familiarity with the traditions.

It is fully evident from his public life that he carefully prepared himself in all the ordinary ele-

* John xii. 49.

† John xiv. 10.

ments of human knowledge, as preliminary to his human mission and as proper accessory aid to its divine end and purpose.

That Christ studied the works about him in nature we know right well by his apt use of similitudes drawn from natural objects, and his equally apt application thereof to enforce great truths he desired to teach.

He did not foreshadow the flippancy of the Chicago evangelist by declaring that the line of preaching his gospel excluded "pretty flowers or pretty stars."

One of his most beautiful teachings was, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow;"* and his application thereof as a rebuke for human pride and vanity was, "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

In the teaching of Jesus the lily and sparrow taught lessons of God's universal providence and goodness.

"If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father."†

* Matthew vi. 28.

† Matthew vi. 30; x. 29.

Nor were there any ungrammaticisms in the carpenter's Sermon on the Mount, or loose logic in his discourses with the rabbis.

He did not emasculate the decalogue to defend doing good on the Sabbath, nor mystify the woman of Samaria at the well with bigoted creeds of special providence.

Jesus uniformly manifested a knowledge of the literature of the day, of the laws of nature, of the customs of men, of the courtesies of society. He quoted with equal facility and fitness the law and the prophets, or the histories and traditions of the rabbis.

He was far from being illiterate in his human nature. It was this knowledge which every man should desire that enabled him to teach with equal force the publican and sinner by the wayside, and the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers in the Temple.

His spiritual lessons were enforced by references to facts in nature.

The tares and the wheat teach one spiritual lesson, the royal supper and wedding garment of the great king another.

The little leaven in the meal of the housewife is the spirit of God in the heart of man; the seed sown by the hand of man illustrates the word of God in man's intellect.

In like manner Paul, referring to the words of

Christ that "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," aptly uses it to illustrate his discourse on the resurrection.

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection." *

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun." †

These references and many others which might be added are not superficial in meaning or accidental in fitness and force, but evince careful thought. Knowledge of the customs of society present and past, acquaintance with natural laws, is evident in every parable of Christ.

Alas that we should so often pervert their meaning by ignorance or presumption !

To affirm that this knowledge of Christ and his disciples was inspired may be a ready excuse for our own ignorance, but would be, if true, a death-blow to all the lessons of comfort and consolation we receive from his life as the Son of man, to all of our hopes through his resurrection and final mediation as the Son of God.

The principle of living our moral, physical, and spiritual life understandingly is not imposed upon

* 1. Corinthians xv. 41.

† Matthew xiii. 43.

us simply as a personal consideration ; this would be but a selfish inducement.

Solomon not only says, "A wise man will hear" for himself, but adds also that he will "increase learning." *

If we reject this advice and refuse to assist others, we will learn by experience that we are but members of a family ; and that while "fools only despise wisdom and instruction" † we will be equally foolish if we quietly abide among the unwise and uninstructed without seeking their development.

Whatever of wisdom or intelligence we have is of God's good spirit working in us by appointed means, and we only follow God's example when we acquire knowledge not merely for ourselves but for the good of all within our reach.

Man is a social being : the suffering arising in a community from ignorance and sin involves the innocent and better informed in the evil.

The criminal must be punished, the poor must be cared for, and disease must be remedied, or we suffer, even directly, from them in others.

It is estimated that one half of the out-patients of hospitals suffer from diseases induced primarily and directly by ignorance. Add to this the diseases indirectly induced, and to these the diseases of private

* Prov. i. 5.

† Prov. i. 7.

life also arising from ignorance or inherited weakness, and we can readily see that our own responsibilities are inseparably connected with our fellows.

The wrecked hopes, the profligate habits, the ruined constitutions and blasted lives are not always wilful sin, except as they occur through wilful ignorance.

The prodigal son, the enfeebled child, the sick-bed, the squandered fortune, are not special visitations of God to chasten his children or to punish his enemies, but the natural and necessary result of violated laws which we should understand and teach to our children and dependants.

The words of Solomon inform us that "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee, to deliver thee from evil." *

The laws of God are from the beginning, but any written revelation of their meaning for man is of recent date and continuous with human development.

God teaches. Man studies and records the teaching; but however knowledge is acquired, whether by scientific research of our own or by adopting the research of others, it is all of God.

The idea that God teaches us by His works and

* Prov. ii. 10.

ways is as inherent in the human mind as is the belief in God Himself; and further, that this teaching is for universal and not for individual benefit.

We are thus shown the close connection between acquired knowledge and an intelligent recognition of God either in faith or worship.

Hence the tradition among all nations of God's coming down among men to instruct them.

CHAPTER X.

MYTHOLOGIES, RELIGIONS AND REFORMATIONS.

IN this way special departments of knowledge came to be symbolized as personifying special manifestations of Deity to men.

“ Who shall say that to no mortal
Heaven e’er oped its mystic portal,
Gave no dream or revelation,
Save to one peculiar nation ?”

The great First Cause was rarely if ever embodied or personified openly, but subordinate attributes were embodied and assumed an influence proportionate to their importance.

Jupiter ruled among the Grecian deities and appeared in various forms among men, but his power was not absolute.

Neptune personified seas, lakes, rivers, and with inferior embodiments personified streams, rain, dew, etc.

Tellus was a female personifying the earth and, with associate deities, all the productions of the earth.

War was a stalwart warrior known as Mars.

Music was a graceful youth, with instruments to play, and could charm even inanimate nature.

Phœbus, in a fiery chariot, personified the sun; Diana, as huntress, the moon.

Minerva, a noble woman springing armed from the head of Jupiter, represented wisdom in peace and war, as well as strength.

This mode of thought and expression in time degenerated into a meaningless worship of mere imagery.

The ignorant believed that God manifested Himself to men, in these and a thousand other forms, to teach, reward, or punish.

Temples of worship were erected to these deities, and contained oracles which were consulted with solemn ceremony, and were supposed to answer through the officiating priest—not materially different from the manner of the holy of holies and the high-priest with the Jews; but the worship instituted by Moses was to one God alone, with only one temple and one oracle, the ark and the mercy-seat.

This, though a pure monotheism, ever tended strongly to idolatry.

The early Persian and Hindoo were also monotheistic, with a strong tendency to pantheism.

The early Greek was a monotheist, as we learn from Lactantius, Diogenes, Laertius, and Aulus Gel-

lius, but with a tendency to polytheism, and finally anthropomorphism.

Early Egypt was also monotheistic, with a tendency to naturalism, but in its worship of Osiris prefigured the most beautiful feature of Christian faith.

Osiris was the Redeemer from sin and the final judge of the sinner.

What judge could be more merciful than the Redeemer himself ?

China was also monotheistic, and there the tendency was to rationalism.

The religion of these early nations and a knowledge of their growth and decline are not matters of indifference even to a highly spiritualized Christianity.

These religions have acted for six thousand years, and still act, an important part in the history of a majority of the inhabitants of the world.

Christianity after nearly two thousand years has but carried the outworks of heathen religions, and in one notable era, after being established over large sections of country, has itself retreated from its possessions.

Cities and nations in Asia and Africa, where Christianity once prevailed almost without a rival, are now devoted to the platitudes of Buddha or the superstitions of Islam.

Even in Catholic Europe the Romish and Greek

churches embrace more than half of Christendom, and the remainder is divided into sects almost innumerable.

We learn from these facts that religious institutions as well as civil institutions may degenerate, that church as well as state may disintegrate, and that intelligence and wisdom are as necessary to one as the other.

Every religion, however false, if studied in its history has a lesson for us to improve.

We learn, too, the touching beauty of ceremonial services and symbolic teaching in the infancy of the understanding, whether of individual man or of the entire race.

We learn that symbols, ceremonials, and rituals may decorate and preserve a half-developed truth until more mature development can understand fully and cast aside the outer garments of infancy.

Fairy stories and legends coming down to us as nursery tales, entering into the fancies of child-life, are but the religious faith of the earlier developments of the human race.

A knowledge of early and progressive religious faith, as determined by rigid study, would explain much that still mystifies the common mind in the religion of to-day.

It is a correct knowledge of the progress and evolution from a firm faith in fairy myths to a rational

understanding of real spiritualistic influence that will best explain much that is mysterious and hard to understand in the religion of Moses as finally developed by Christ.

We can learn like lessons from every prominent religion of the past, if we will attach sufficient importance to them to study them with scientific accuracy and impartiality.

The sacred writings of the Hindoo were written in a language until recently unknown to English scholars, and were probably contemporary with Abraham.

These scriptures proclaimed a Supreme Being by different titles, one of which was Ormuzd, who personified Light, Purity, and Truth.

Opposed to him they recognize Ahriman, the principle of Evil or Darkness.

There was a constant conflict between these, and though Ahriman seemed to prevail now, Ormuzd, the author of good, was finally to triumph.

This, it will be seen, differs but little from the Miltonian idea of God and Devil, except that our theological Devil has an eternal existence, the Hindoo's has not.

The sacred canon of the Buddhist religion, which was an outgrowth or reformation from the older Brahmin faith, as Christianity was an outgrowth of Mosaism, is now translated into the Sanscrit, Pali,

Burmese, Siamese, Thibetan, Mongolian, and Chinese languages, and is thus used by their missionaries for teaching to over five hundred millions of souls.

This is the wall against which Christian missions beat, and, like the Chinese wall, it extends around the whole empire of Buddha.

These heathen missionaries are by no means ignorant men, at least not in greater proportion than our own, and have among them men who compare favorably with the scholars of Europe.

Not many years since, when Keshub Chunder Sen, a modern Hindoo philosopher, visited London, he there defended his religious faith as a theist by the side of Dean Stanley and others of equal note, and there quoted not only the Hindoo writings but other ancient beliefs, and also Mosaism and Christianity, as readily as Paul quoted ancient Greek literature and Christianity to the learned Athenians.

How many of our modern missionaries in the land of Chunder Sen could stand by his side and quote the Hindoo Vedas and the Avesta of Persia, or even the English translation of the Chinese classics of Confucius and Mencius? How many who flippantly expound the meaning and purpose of the Lord in leading Cyrus and Darius to be shepherds of scattered Israel know that, two hundred years before Alexander overthrew Darius and invaded In-

dia and Persia, the Dhammapoda, a part of the sacred canon, claimed to be the very words of Buddha himself, proclaimed such maxims as these?—"Let man overcome anger by love." "Let him overcome evil by good." "Let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth." "Do not yield to anger; control thy body: with thy body practice virtue." "Control thy mind: with thy mind practice virtue."

"A powerful god is Ahura—Mazda.

'Twas he who made this earth below;

'Twas he who made that heaven above;

'Twas he who made man."*

The wide-spread Iranic worship of which Zoroaster was the prophet, and the Avesta a sacred book, was not materially different from the Vedic, either in its origin, belief, or degeneracy.

Ahura-Mazda was the name by which their god was known and worshipped, and to whom Artaxerxes, Darius, and Cyrus prayed. The Jehovah of the Jew was Ahura-Mazda to the same Cyrus called by Isaiah God's shepherd, anointed to rebuild the desolate temple at Jerusalem. Recently read inscriptions on the ruins of Persepolis and elsewhere tell us of prayers offered by Xerxes in

* From the red granite mountain near Ecbatana, written by Darius 500 B.C.

his palace to Ahura-Mazda (in modern Persian, Ormuzd) which are in spirit, and often in word, such as David and Solomon offered to Jehovah in Jerusalem.

In the Babylonian captivity of the Jews was their final rescue from a corrupt idolatry: their captors were Monotheists, and schoolmasters to them of a better creed than that of Baal and Astharoth, into which they had fallen. The sad dirges of the daughters of Zion, wailing mournfully by the rivers of Babylon, were in reality but preludes to purer strains that ever after ascended to Jehovah alone.

Thus knowledge of God's dealings with and recognition by nations, so intimately connected with the Jewish people, has been obtained only by patient research and scientific study; it is not the inspiration of ignorance, but of acquisition.

Year after year have men imperilled their lives to penetrate the mountain fastnesses and cross the arid plains of Asia, to seek out and save the record of the almost forgotten past. Such searchers after truth have affiliated themselves with the natives, adopted their customs, mastered their language, that they might thus gain access to temples still sacred in their ruins, to monuments of worship, holy caves, and search for inscriptions and perchance find a long-treasured manuscript.

Thus one French devotee alone, Anquetil Duper-

ron, collected 180 manuscripts of the original Avesta and its Zend. Returning to France, he devoted the remainder of his life to a careful translation of the treasured scriptures. For years he was regarded as a fraud, until new research by Rask, Burnouf, and others, especially philological research, established the authority of the scriptures beyond further question. Here, in a language older than the cuneiform inscriptions of Xerxes, we find in the mountains and valleys of the Asiatic world Ahura-Mazda worshipped as the father of all pure creation, who made a pathway from the sun, who ordered the waxing and waning moon in its orbit, held the earth in the hollow of his hand, suspending over it the clouds, guiding the winds, and giving bounds to the sea. This worship degenerated to fire-worship, and finally to idolatry. But the idea of one god has never been utterly lost, and a revival there to-day, on the basis of the ancient faith and the ancient Bible of the Aryan race, would at once open up these oriental lands to the Gospel of Christ, as the last prophet of the race.

A common use of the Tao-te-King of Lao-tse, the fire-king, and four Shun books of Confucius would in like manner open up China. The Chinese are undoubtedly the oldest race maintaining an uninterrupted national existence, and it is now believed by our best scholars that the early religion of China

was a pure monotheism and was as universal in China as in Israel, without the early Israelitish tendency to monolatry. Dr. Legge, interpreter of Chinese classics, thinks Confucius did not clearly teach the immortality of the soul, but it is evident this doctrine was taught even more clearly by Confucius than by Moses. Confucius, like Moses, was but the reformer of a religion which had degenerated, and, affirming this, took no credit to himself for new inspiration. In later generations there were three divisions of this religion, not unlike the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees of the Jews. They had, and still have, benevolent societies, which at times have scarcely been equalled in number and variety in Christian lands.

They have asylums for orphans, for widows, and for the aged and infirm; they have hospitals for the sick; where we have only a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, they have an asylum for the care of the maimed and helpless.

Their free schools are more extensive than ours, more thorough and better organized; yet we are continually told by both pulpit and press that hospitals, infirmaries, public charities, and free schools date from the Christian era and are an outcome of Christianity.*

* "China and Chinese," by John L. Nevins.

There are several free libraries in Japan; one in Tokio contains sixty-three thousand eight hundred and forty volumes in Chinese, five thousand one hundred and sixty-two in English, and between eight and nine thousand in other European languages.

In China there are more than two thousand colleges, common schools innumerable.

Their libraries outnumber ours ten to one.

There are more than two millions of highly educated men; in a population of four hundred millions there is but a small proportion who cannot read and write.

The great theological school of Islam, founded nearly one thousand years ago (A.D. 975), kept in the Mosque of El Aza (Mosque of Flowers) at Cairo, according to Prof. Döllinger contained but five hundred students in 1838, but in 1875 (according to Dr. Ellinwood, of the Presbyterian Board of Missions) it contained over ten thousand students and over three hundred professors or teachers. This statement is confirmed by Dr. Schaff.*

These teachers receive no stated salary and subsist on meagre fare, which is furnished them by the pupils, who are generally poor.

Say what we may as to Moslem degradation,

* "Through Bible Lands," p. 84.

Musselmans are a power in theology, if not in religion, in almost every pagan land.

The daily devotion they manifest to a worship which they believe to be inspired by a holy Koran, and a temperance so remarkable amidst so much poverty, dirt, and degradation, might well be imitated by professing Christians of a higher culture, who live in fine houses and look down upon the pagan with contempt.

In Sierra Leone, on the northwestern coast of Africa, is another school of one thousand pupils, being educated not for an honored priesthood, but for a life of missionary labor.

If Christianity is to compete with such rivals, it must be by understanding whatever there is good and noble in man, or in his attempt to discover God. It must respect their treasured memories of better days, and overcome present backsliding, not by arousing national hostility to a new faith, but by exciting a proper national pride to procure the acceptance of a new development of old truths, yet honored by tradition as part of a past inheritance.

Such was the spirit of Paul, most notably exhibited at Athens.

He did not charge the Greek philosophy with idolatry or unbelief; he did not offend the learned men he addressed by denouncing the wickedness of

Athens: he quoted the best of their theology, and by that enforced his own.

He quoted their literature, and thus gave force to that of the prophets.

The good that is left in any man or nation of men, however degraded, is a better influence to redeem from vice and restore to virtue than hard names and offensive personalities, however true and merited they may be.

Notwithstanding the degradation of an overcrowded population in China, the memory and teachings of Confucius have been held in honor for over twenty-five hundred years, and his name has been cherished amid all the revolutions and changes of the empire.

His posterity have been treated with peculiar respect, and constitute at this day the only hereditary nobility in China with one trifling exception, viz., that of Mencius.

His writings are the text-books of their schools and mottoes of state government.

As the Jews avoided the name of Jehovah, as too sacred for common use, so Confucius avoided the name for God, and used the general term Heaven instead.

"Have no depraved thoughts," is a text in common use; another of great force is, "He who offends against Heaven has none to whom he can pray."

A common proverb is, "What you do not like when done to yourself, do not to others." This is but the negative form of the same lesson taught by Christ five hundred years later. "As far as in me lies, I will not do myself the things I condemn in my neighbor." *

"Be such a son to your parents as you would desire your sons to be to you."

"What you would be angry to suffer from others, that do not to others." †

"We should behave to others as we would desire them to behave to us." ‡

Seneca says, "Expect from another whatever you do to another."

Epictetus repeats the same sentiment and adds, "Only by God's aid can you attain to this."

Buddha says, "The holy man must desire for all living things the same happiness he desires for himself."

How many of our teachers of religion to-day, while speaking lightly of the literary and scientific labors of other men, could explain to the understanding of an average audience the literature of past religions so nearly allied to our own? How many could explain the spiritual meaning of the

* Menander, quoted by Herodotus, iii. p. 142.

† Isocrates, 431 B.C.

‡ Aristotle, quoted by Diogenes Laertius, 322 B.C.

songs and ceremonials of the ancient Vedic worship or the true teachings of the Vedic scriptures? How much beyond mere legend, or worse, abuse, do we hear on these points of interest from any pulpit? How much could we hear, if the attempt were made, of these or of the sacred scriptures of which Zoroaster was the exponent? How much of the orthodox religion of ancient China, or even the analects of Confucius and Mencius, though these have been translated in English for years?

Yet it is a question of incalculable moment to understand the progress of corruption from these early faiths and trust in God to modern ignorance and superstition. It is by no means false religions alone that fall from their first estate; even the religions of Moses and Jesus have again fallen in the house of their friends.

How many who talk dogmatically of doctrines and deride scientific study, and moreover are by education and profession teachers of the religion which Jesus taught as never man taught, and which was the outgrowth of the law which he came to fulfil, as well as the traditions he set aside, have studied the Talmud of Jerusalem or Babylon, or could explain to an inquirer the difference between these, much less the difference between these and the Targum of Onkelos and Jonathan? What do we hear from these teachers who scorn a lesson from lilies

that beautify the field, and stars that sparkle in the sky, about the religion of Egypt, which was a mighty kingdom when Abraham was a wandering nomad? Egypt, that enslaved Israel for four hundred years, and to a great extent moulded their character as a nation! Egypt, where the infant Jesus found refuge from Herod, and where the eunuch converted by Philip was prime-minister, and where the early followers of the risen Redeemer established a powerful church!—soon, alas! to fall by its own degeneracy and give place to the old idolatry! It was here, too, was made the famous Septuagint version of the Hebrew Bible, two hundred and fifty years before Christ, and from which Christ quoted both law and gospel. Thus the theologues of Christianity, professing to be the almoners of God's truth to all nations, are largely ignorant of the sacred writings in which the early fathers of our race once trusted, and from which, like the Jew, they fell by the traditions of men. This disregard of past literature and present study is to deprive ourselves of useful and necessary teaching as to God's dealing with every nation and every age but our own. Yet it was by these sacred books, and such knowledge of nature as could then be had, that God led and guided the swarming millions of the oriental world. These people were a part of God's plan from before the foundation of the world, and

they will in some way be a part of the great hereafter.

Our own Bible tells us through prophet, Christ, and apostle that, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they will be judged by the law and knowledge they had, and not by the revelation they had not. Whether known to them as Indra, Ahura, El, Shadda, or Jehovah, the God we worship has never left Himself without a witness. Among the children of men, even to-day, notwithstanding the Gentile nations are so far behind us in civilization and consequent experience of a true faith, some of them manifest a better devotion by a practical support of their delusions than Christians do for their higher privileges. Some of the heathen nations to-day spend more money, perform more devotional work, submit to more sacrifice in the service of a mistaken faith than Christians do for theirs.

Taking into account the difference of labor in Siam and the United States, the liberality exercised there in support of their temples and worship would here be equal to sixty dollars a year to each inhabitant. The amount paid in this favored land for the same purpose is fifty cents a year to each person, including salaries, pew-rents, operatic choirs, and similar luxuries, personal but not charitable or religious. Very recently, at a meeting in the sacred city of Benares, India, Kaloo Suragee made a public ap-

peal for charity, and 6000 rupees (about \$40,000) were subscribed to translate Vedic tracts, and to send missionaries to the Christian land of Australia to reform the profligacy and drunkenness reported to be so prevalent there.

Donations like Mr. Peabody's of \$50,000 to the poor of London are heralded over Christendom, yet this is small compared with that of a Bombay Parsee, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, who gave \$3,500,000 in charities to men of every religion and race. The Committee of the Bombay District Benevolent Society in a report says, "Not one beggar of the Parsee caste has ever applied to the society for relief; nor is a Parsee pauper ever seen in the streets." The Buddhists of India have now more than three times the number of missionaries in China than Christians of all denominations have; it is estimated that the entire priesthood of China is over a million. Is not this a devotion and spirit that should be utilized for a better faith? Surely in the final reckoning of accounts such great devotion will furnish some offset to a mistaken faith. It will be for us to answer in that same reckoning how much our faith will offset our ignorance and lack of devotion. Alas! a careful examination of our own hearts would compel us to join in the wail coming down from Jew and Gentile through all past time. "Where-with shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself

before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" * In reply to this we would still be forced to the same old truth, also revealed by Micah: "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God?" To walk humbly before God we must know of His exalted works; then can we join with David and say, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" †

We may without much study see that God made all things; but how much better for an immortal soul to understand somewhat of the glory revealed in His works, and the wondrous things revealed in His past dealings with the children of men! One may learn in a rude way, simply, reading the parable of the ten virgins; but how much more rich the illustration when a knowledge of oriental customs teaches us that the bridegroom did thus come forth

* Micah vi. 6, 7.

† Ps. viii. 3, 4.

in the night, escorting his bride from her paternal home to his own; that virgins with burning lamps did meet them, and when they entered the doors were shut. We might perhaps receive the further lesson that the first filling of the lamp did not suffice for any of them to enter; Christians now cannot enter with one filling of the Holy Spirit. The virgins were all, as we would now express it, converted—that is, started right; the foolish ones relied on that and slept; the wise ones refilled and trimmed their lamps until the bridegroom came, and they alone entered the lighted mansion of the Lord.

The reading of the “prodigal son” teaches after a fashion that “Wilful waste makes woful want;” but we also often hear by way of warning that it was disobedience to parents worked the ruin. How much better to know that according to custom the son was justified in asking his portion of the paternal inheritance, that he might go to other lands and traffic for himself, while the elder son remained at home to possess the family estate!

Thus the sin Christ illustrated was not the disobedience of the younger son or the jealousy of the elder, but the sin of profligacy and self-indulgence, and the father’s willingness to forgive on repentance and to welcome the wanderer back to his love. The simple reading of the king’s “marriage supper” for

his son may even convey a lesson of doubtful justice ; for after the king sent out to the highways and hedges and compelled the guests to come in, he consigned one of those thus compelled to come in, to outer darkness for appearing before him without a wedding garment. How much better to know that, whether guests came from palaces or hedges, they did not enter the master's presence in garments of their own, but were provided with a guest-garment at the entrance-chamber, and to reject this and enter the presence without it was wilful contempt of the free gift of the king and the law of hospitality !

Thus we learn that every invited guest of the heavenly King, at the marriage feast of His Son with the church redeemed, must come without a wedding garment of his own and be clothed as he enters His mansion in the wedding garment provided by the Lord Himself. It is well to read from the prophets that Tyre should become a barren rock, and Babylon a mound of earth, and Nineveh a heap of ruins ; but it is also well to read from the studies of antiquarian research, from the opened tombs of centuries, the hand of God in their glory and in their shame.

It is well to read in Bible prophecy that kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers, to God's people ; but it is well also to read

that the fulfilment of this promise began not only with Cyrus and the old dispensation, but continued in Constantine, the first Christian emperor, and on down through the centuries until even now, it is still being worked out in the queens of England and Madagascar. The history of religion, whether Christian, Jewish, or pagan, is a history of its continuous evolution toward perfection by repeated reformation; even the teachings of Christ were to be supplemented through all time by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. As this can act only through human agencies, these must develop in order that grace and truth may abound. If there are eras of great degeneracy, there must follow eras of great reform. No reformer ever closed the door of progress to his successors. The monolatry of Ur was reformed by Abraham into the monotheism of Melchizedek; corrupted in Egypt, it was rescued and reformed by Moses. Joshua still improved many of its remaining barbarisms and spread it over Palestine; here Samuel revived it, and David established it as the religion of a great nation. Idolatry and corruption again wrecked it, until the lessons of a long captivity wrought repentance. Ezra and Jeremiah worked out a new development, which with varying vicissitudes ended only in the fulness of time and the gospel of Christ, given for Jew and Gentile.

But through all these lapses and reformations there was a steady progress of religion towards better things. The fabulous phoenix is in a spiritual sense a living reality. The life of religion seems often burned out by persecution or buried in the ashes of its own rubbish, to rise again to a new and better life.

How far and how fast this new and better life may develop will greatly depend upon the average intelligence of the age. Knowledge of material things, like knowledge of spiritual things, is not always a blessing when confined to a favored class, whether priests or rulers; the temptation under these circumstances to use knowledge as a stepping-stone to influence or power is so great that church and state alike yield to its influence. It is only when both material and religious knowledge is the common possession of all that civilization makes and maintains a steady progress of development. There are still superstitions, imposed upon religion during the mediæval ages, which science must remove before religion can fill the intellect and soul, making man the true image of his Maker, at least so far as a true manhood is intended to reveal that image among men. True, much has been done, but the error still remains of substituting creeds and dicta of men, for foundation principles, instead of the unchangeable and universal laws of God; the as-

sumed inspiration of men for the real revelation of Deity. To worship God intelligently, we must know Him as He is, and not as pharisaic traditions may depict or a dogmatic theology dictate ; and He must be known to all men by the application of His own Spirit.

The ark of the Lord is no longer a mystery to be hidden from the people and revealed only through mysterious ceremonies or oracular utterances. When the Saviour on the cross said, "It is finished," the yawning earth, the rent rocks, and open graves were but the funeral utterances, as the darkened sun was the funeral-pall, of dead ceremonials. When the vail of the Temple was rent in twain, it was to reveal to all the holy of holies—the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, and brooding cherubim of eternal love ; God in Christ stood face to face with all mankind. No more sacrifice of bulls and of goats upon the altar, for "the lamb slain" was from the foundation of the world, for all men and for all times. No more standing afar off in the outer court of the Temple awaiting the incense, for "we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ;" no more mediating priest or Levite, for we have a great High Priest close by the throne of judgment. Henceforth the contrite heart, not the smoking altar, is the earthly offering ; the soul's prayer, the incense rising heavenward ; the risen Re-

deemer, the pledge of our final acceptance. In that new Jerusalem revealed to John, where "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." * The breath of God first breathed upon us, and the reiterated manifestation of God to us in ten thousand ways, is but seed sown in our hearts, for intellect to cultivate and the soul to ripen, that the great Master may reap an eternal harvest. Let us honor the seed and the sowing, receiving the seed in good ground, for, as the Master said, "He that receiveth the seed in good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it." † Let not the theologian then boast of creeds alone, but, like Paul, know how to be all things to all men; let him not address men as sinners above all others, for Christ said they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were not that, nor they of Tyre and Sidon, for we are all alike sinners before God, and are sinners lost or saved as we reject or accept His pardoning grace, and not as we exalt our own ignorance and mere ideal emotions of a fancied spiritual experience.

Paul, with only Gentiles for hearers, the images of their idolatry and their altars filling the streets and groves around him and covering their Acropolis be-

* Revelations vii. 17.

* Matt. xiii. 23.

fore him, addressed his learned audience with the respect such intelligence merited: "Ye men of Athens" won their attention. He then argued from their own philosophy that the images before him, though executed with all the beauty and excellence of human skill and art, could not personify God, who alone gives life and expression to all things; neither could he dwell in temples made with hands. Then he quoted Zeno and their favorite poets to show that all men are alike and made of one blood, "his own offspring," thus proving from the laws of nature and their own literature that God made all things, and was alone entitled to our worship. He further argued that the mysterious divinity they had sought to honor by their altars, and whom they worshipped as the "unknown God," is not far from each one of us, and was in these last days revealed in Christ Jesus. Had Paul known that the gospel of Jesus would have been promulgated in the language of Athens, and his own letters owe their preservation to Greek literature, he could not have spoken with greater respect. The result of this course was that certain men believed, among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite, who was a judge of the supreme court of Athens and had supervision of religious matters. Thus Paul's dignity and respect to a devout but mistaken worship, and his purely intellectual presentation of the true faith,

secured not only a respectful hearing, but powerful support; from that day we hear nothing of religious persecution in Athens, or a total abandonment of the faith Paul preached. Had Paul offended the refined taste of the Athenians by splenetic sniffs at their philosophy, and outraged their devotion by sanctimonious sneers at their religion, neither Dionysius nor certain men of the people would have respected him or received his religion. The application of the Holy Spirit as explained by Christ is by means of the truth made intelligent: the disciples heard the words of Christ from day to day, but it was only by oft-repeated lessons their minds emerged from the bondage of Judaism to the freedom of salvation by repentance alone. The amount and kind of knowledge required for a true Christian faith will of course differ according to the development and circumstances, but it is perfectly safe and profitable, under all circumstances, to add to any present attainment. The heathen were required to accept the witness of God in nature, to see if perchance they could find Him; the Jew was required to study the law of obedience, the meaning of ceremonial services and sacrifices; the Christian is required to understand how in Christ all ceremonials are useless, how broken law is to be atoned for by repentance, and that the life and teachings of Christ lead us in spirit direct to God. The follower of

Moses was not to be ignorant of God's first great lessons in nature, given for the study and use of all, for on these very laws of nature was the law of obedience based. The Christian, because of a fuller revelation and a higher spiritual experience, must not be ignorant of the law of the prophets, for on these depend the existence of the Christian revelation. Spiritual devotion without the attainment of all possible knowledge is not religion, nor is half-knowledge a whole religion. The pagan idolater, the brutal Turk, and even the lower savage may teach a lesson of devotion to professing Christians: the misguided parent offering his first-born for his transgressions, the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul, manifests a devotion to the God he worships, misguided as it is, far in excess of ours to the God we profess to understand more fully. The elements of truth and goodness have ever been flowing as a living stream through the whole history of the world, and ever deepening and widening. Let us not by narrow-mindedness obstruct its onward flow. The idea we form of God being based only upon our intellectual nature and conceptions, we cannot personify a God beyond what we are able to conceive and idealize. Thus a low nature will form a low idea of God: the God of the savage is a God of retaliation and revenge, because to him these are virtues in social life. The

Jews partook largely of this in their early life, and it required a long experience to teach them "that God had no delight in the death of the wicked;" even then the Mosaic rule did not take them beyond the doctrine of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."* It required four thousand years to develop their mind to the Christian standard, "love your enemies," etc., which precept we are still far from practising. Intelligent worship of Deity cannot be accomplished by mere spiritual exercises or emotions; these emotions can only be comprehended in proportion as our mind is developed and enlarged to improve them. This is clearly taught in the parable of the talents: one talent or ten was given according to the several ability of each. If a man can receive but one talent, it is impossible, speaking after the manner of men, for even God to make him the recipient of ten. To be fitted for the full reception of the Holy Spirit the intellect of man must be developed to comprehend God's revelation in His works, and to study and understand His laws as revealed for our benefit. Observation of natural laws must develop a God behind them, but only scientific study of nature will reveal higher and more refined ideas. Not that science alone can define the spiritual nature of Deity or

* Matt. v. 38.

personify His person, for our own natures are both spiritual and material, and any harmonious or proper idea of a Divine Being can only be based on material knowledge spiritually applied, or, as Christ expressed it, by the spirit of truth applying to our hearts the knowledge already obtained by instruction. It is thus by advanced intelligence the ideal God we worship has been disabused of almost fiendish attributes; the Bible we revere as the lamp to our feet and the light to our path has ceased to sanction horrible doctrines.

Max Müller asserts, as the result of inquiry, "that more than half the difficulties of religious thought owe their origin to the ignorance and misinterpretation of ancient language and ancient thought by modern language and modern thought."* The separation of the Latin and Greek church on the *filio que* article of the Nicene Creed, and the protests of Gregory and others against an evident tendency to tri-theistic worship, as well as other contentions, are proof that Müller is far within the truth. Ignorance of language, of literature, history, customs, art, and science generally renders a man unfit to interpret large portions of the Bible or teach religion to educated men, unless it be those truths which are so simple "that the wayfaring man though a fool need

* "Science of Religion," p. 25.

not err therein ;" and even he will be none the better for a bigoted and ignorant theology. On the other hand, learning hinders no man in his devotions or in his religious work. Paul was none the less successful as an evangelist for having studied at the feet of Gamaliel, or Luke for being learned in medicine. Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton were none the less good Christians because they were scientific astronomers. Bacon was none the worse for his philosophy, or Milton for his Latin. A distinguished artist when asked what he mixed his paints with to produce such beauty and blending of tint and permanency of color replied, "With brains, sir." Religion also is more beautiful in its blending and more permanent in its impressions when appreciated and applied with brains.

Paul tells the Corinthians that "in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." * Those who emasculate the religion of Jesus from intelligent study, and perhaps also from a righteous life, leaving only a life of faith and prayer, as founded upon selected passages, would do well to remember that it is only the just who are specified as living by faith, † and that we are required to "pray with the

* I. Corinthians xiv. 19.

† Romans i. 17.

understanding also." * If this latter condition was enforced, it would be greatly to the glory of God and the edification and profit of church meetings; for, as James tells us, "the prayer of the just availeth with God." † Solomon assures us that the prayer of the wicked is abomination. ‡

For centuries the Christian church did not countenance astronomy, except as necromancy. It was heresy to say the earth revolved around the sun, because the Bible said the sun rose and set; the head of the church declared that the Bible taught certain astronomical facts, and to dispute these incurred the penalty of death.

The tests of innocence or guilt by fire or water, burning or drowning, so long prevalent in the Christian church, were but a phase of ignorance and tyranny in religion, which quoted the Bible for authority over soul and body. His claim to determine the bounds of knowledge so developed in the church at one era that it not only forbade the study of new laws in nature, but discarded and denounced laws well known in human life. Marriage, the first covenant of humanity, was forbidden to the priest, that he might love only God. A monastery was devised, where penance would mortify the natural passions, and a nunnery as co-ordinate, was to

* I. Corinthians xiv. 15.

† James v. 16

‡ Prov. xxviii. 9.

blot out the maternal instincts of womanhood. But thwarted nature revolted at the violation of its laws, until virgin mothers honored the nunneries with immaculate conceptions and the monasteries swarmed with the miraculous offspring of celibate monks. Our rescue from such vile practice (carried on under the guise of religion), and the great freedom we enjoy in religious liberty, is because a developed intellect finally rebelled successfully against a base, ignorant theology and rescued religion from its brutal grasp. The claim of the church to be the only receptacle and arbiter of knowledge was a stumbling-block to the development of religion as well as scientific truth in Europe for a thousand years. One great hindrance to our missionary work to-day is lack of education on the part of missionaries. There are noble exceptions to this, but as a rule missionaries are unfit for their work, because they are not educated to its requirements. The missionary should not only know thoroughly and sensibly the religion he is to teach, but he should also understand the religion he is to contend with ; not only the superstitious beliefs of the degraded masses, who, like the same class in Christian lands, are almost beyond help, but he should by careful study investigate the sacred books of their written religion, the creeds of the priests and philosophers. If our missionaries had begun by learning the Vedas of the Hindoo

Pundit and the Avesta of the Persian Parsee, as Paul knew the literature of Athens, and as Christ knew the laws of Moses and the rabbinical traditions, they would have greatly facilitated their success. Max Müller, Burnouf, Whitney, and others have written that the principle of caste, so detrimental to Christian work in those lands, is actually forbidden in the early Hindoo and Persian scriptures of Brahma and Zoroaster. The Parsee and Pundit like the Pharisees had made void the law by traditions of men. If missionaries could meet the priests and learned men of India as Paul met the philosophers at Athens, and quote from their own laws and religions, we would soon have easier access to the people of almost an entire continent. It is to the experts in Arabic that the Beyrout mission is largely indebted for its present success. Solomon, who wrote of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springs by the wall, of beasts, of fowls, and of creeping things, songs a thousand and five, proverbs three thousand, tells us, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer."* What shall we say then to the question of the same preacher of wisdom, "What has the wise man more than the fool?"† "In much wisdom is much grief."

* Prov. xxv. 2, 4.

† Ecc. iv. 8.

“He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.” * The answer is clear and the meaning plain to him who studies the sense thereof. Music is melody to him who studies the harmonies thereof. But there is no profitable answer to him who studies only a single text, and interprets that by his own emotions, scorning the knowledge and experience of others. To such a one diverse and deep sayings of Holy Writ afford no light. It is not a single text or a single fact that teaches all of wisdom, or a single note or bar that teaches all of music ; text must be aptly joined for useful knowledge, as notes are joined for harmony. The grief of wisdom and the sorrow of knowledge is when men use wisdom and knowledge as they use labor, and toil for mere personal ambition or sensual gratification of a perishing body. This abuse of wisdom and knowledge is forbidden alike by true science and true religion. The command to work six days is no license to abuse work or pervert it from God’s service. The work of the body six days tends to our welfare and happiness, but to accomplish this result the work must be performed in God’s vineyard and as He directs. The same rule applies to the intellect ; it, too, must work but in God’s service : body and mind must work together honestly and heartily for God’s vin-

* Ecc. i. 18.

tage if we expect to partake spiritually the final fruitage of the gathered harvest. Thus will we see "that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness." *

The spirit and the understanding, like the blades of a scissors, must be united to do their proper work: either blade may cut alone, but rudely and roughly; so, also, the spirit of man alone may glorify God after a fashion, and the intellect alone may do the same; but if intellect or soul ever reaches a higher development here or hereafter, they must work and develop together here. We can thus better comprehend another proverb of Solomon, "God giveth to the man that is good before Him joy in wisdom and knowledge, but to the sinner He giveth travail of soul and body;" † for the law of God, which is a blessing and mercy to him who obeys it, is a curse and punishment to him who violates it. All of our civil and social laws are founded on this fact of our being; and the law if obeyed brings its own reward, the law broken brings its own punishment. By thus studying the revelations of God, intellectually as well as spiritually, the so-called special providences of God cease to be bugbears of man's ignorance and superstition, or ministers to his ignorance and self-conceit.

* Ecc. ii. 13.

† Ecc. ii. 26.

When it is once fully realized that the sun shines upon the evil and the good, and the rain falls alike upon the just and the unjust, the great law of love is also realized by which we know God as the Father of our spirits as well as the Framer of our bodies. When we fully realize by fixed laws that seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, shall never cease to any man, good or bad, except by his own acts, so long as the world lasts, we can better understand the free gift of God's grace to all who will accept it, and better realize the words of inspiration that "the wages of sin is death," and its reverse, that "they who love righteousness shall reign in glory;" for a sun has risen each day since time began, and will continue to rise each day while time endures.

So will the sun of God's loving mercy illumine our souls, both now and forever; thus man cannot be all an atheist, even if he would, for he is often driven, in spite of his lower nature, to follow that higher law of the spirit and receive into good ground that seed which will bear fruit in this world many fold, and in the world to come life everlasting. Every city, state, and national government, though contrived by men, often by wicked men, are forced for the good of the government to re-enact the ten commandments, as the best known for the government of men; they may not put God in the

letter of the constitution, but they cannot exclude the spirit of God's law and maintain civil government. Thus the code known as the common law comes down to us from the earliest dawn of human record, was remodelled in the jurisprudence of Rome, struggled through the night of mediæval darkness, was rescued with the rescued Bible of Luther, and now gives the law of human right-doing to thousands who know not its origin, its struggle, or its rescue. This is true, because earthly and spiritual things cannot be entirely separated. The religion of sympathy for the poor and afflicted without the religion of relief is but a mockery of charity: we may pity the lunatic, but we pity in vain unless we seek to restore him to his right mind, or at least care for him properly; we may pity the blind and deaf, but our pity is no relief without the use of means to better their condition.

Knowledge of the human system, the law of its being in health and disease; knowledge of remedies, are the legitimate agents of all we expect to accomplish in the cure of bodily ailments or even mental disease. Knowledge like this has been banished from the realms of religion and in its place we have had the amulets, bones of saints, wood of the cross, and the whole catalogue of holy relics and other mummeries by which priestly impostors once crept into men's houses and led captive silly souls. If the

pulpit would explain and enforce the laws of God as revealed in nature more, and creeds of men less, it would be all the better for progressive Christianity. A little more physiology, even at the expense of æsthetic theology, would develop a more healthy Christian, and a conscientious personal application of the laws of life as laws of God would be all the worse for tobacco and alcohol. To coddle disease by ignorance or indulgence of bodily desires is to keep a spare room ready for the devil. It was theological intolerance which resisted the use of inoculation when first introduced in England, and nothing short of its adoption by the royal family silenced the absurd cry of interfering with the providence of God. Seventy years later Jenner met the same opposition when he substituted the milder remedy of vaccination. When anæsthetics were first introduced into the practice of midwifery the greatest opposition was offered by certain clergymen, who said it was an attempt to evade the curse pronounced upon Eve.* In the face of this opposition to science, past and present, the fact remains that science has not only ameliorated and elevated the condition of man, but has notably relieved religion from the most fearful delusions and really assisted it to be as required, first pure, then peaceable. To the ignorant

* Gen. iii. 16.

savage, and for a long time to the ignorant Christian, the sudden darkness of the sun at noonday was a fearful portent of some dreadful doom ; now this phenomena is but a sublime fact in the ways of God. The sudden appearance of Halley's comet in 1456 horrified the Christian world, which trembled before it as being the prelude of pestilence, famine, or some direful disaster, perhaps the final judgment. Priests of the church prayed and fasted, church-bells were rung, and exorcisms practised, but the comet came nearer and grew brighter, and catastrophe seemed so imminent that the pope himself, Calixtus II., at last came to the rescue, and issued his bull against the comet as dangerous to the prerogatives of the Romish Church. The research of astronomers has superseded the necessity of either adjurations or fulminations of this kind, and the enlightened world now welcomes the erratic visitor among the stars as a new wonder of divine power. To the ignorant devotee, thunder and lightning, storm and tempest, volcano and earthquake, were the work of evil spirits, awful mysteries.

“ And his heart, though stout and brave,
Still like muffled drum was beating
Funeral marches to the grave.”

To the intelligent mind these phenomena of nature are but ministers of God's will, to come and go, not to execute vengeance, but as ordained

from the foundation of the world. How can an ignorant man, quailing before ghosts and evil spirits, develop the best of humanity or trust in God? how can such a man be a reliable teacher of others, or a reliable statesman in times of distress and public calamity? An ignorant man, however he professes devotion to men or confidence in God, is but a broken reed.

“ Not his is the hand that can turn back the billow
That threatens to sweep o’er our altars and homes;
He may live in the breeze that but plays in the willow,
But woe unto him when the hurricane comes.”

It is an admitted law of brain action that the power and capacity of the mind is developed and enlarged by study, and we know that by the same law spiritual growth may be developed and grow with it. By this association of spirit and intelligence we find many things material and spiritual may exist in perfect harmony which otherwise would appear, as through a glass darkly, in conflict.

We are saved by faith, but both brain and body must keep step to the yearning of the soul in order that we may walk by sight and know God in all that may be known, and may realize that in each law of nature God has given proof that He will also perform those promises in which by faith we trust in the resurrection of our spirits from the power of sin and death. Ignorance is more a sin in this age,

because the knowledge of hidden things in nature, which was but recently concealed in dead languages and scientific books, is now written in plain language and in our own tongue. Add to this the facilities afforded by cheap books and free schools and we might almost doubt if an ignorant Christian could exist. A Christian above all others should develop his mind, as the controlling element of his being, not only for his own benefit, but that he may increase his religious influence among men and add to the general stock of truth for the benefit of his successors, or, as Solomon aptly expresses it, "increase wisdom." It is this better aim that gives to us all that is now valuable in science and the useful arts. Every new truth ascertained and made known to others is seed sown for posterity to harvest, as we ourselves garner the seed sown in the past. A duty thus beautifully expressed in the seventy-eighth psalm: "Give ear, O my people . . . to the words of my mouth. . . . I will utter dark sayings of old : which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done, . . . that they [the children] should make them known to their children : . . . that they might set their hope in God."

CHAPTER XI.

PROGRESS OF INTELLIGENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.

THE discoveries of Newton and Galileo were the outcome of those of Copernicus and Kepler. Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome prepared the way for Luther, Erasmus, and Melanchthon, Knox for Wesley and Whitefield. No man can fully realize his obligations even for the simplest daily blessing to the careful study and intelligence of his predecessors. The carpenter's plane after many failures owes its fitness for its work to a back-iron so simple as to seem unnecessary, and yet so scientific that it cannot be replaced by anything else. Yeast, though known in Egypt before Abraham left Ur, is still a sore trial to Christian women, because they do not learn the law of vegetable fermentation. Thus when we refuse to learn we suffer, and too often lay it to God's mysterious providence.

Torrents sweep down the mountains and desolate the valleys of Europe, because the mountain-side was ruthlessly stripped of its trees; whole districts of Africa have been denuded of forests, until the burning desert is almost literally a flaming sword to

expel man from what might be a paradise of beauty and fertility. The advance of every generation is begun on the ended labors of the past. Our simplest comforts are often the outcome of years, even ages, of experiment and study. The elegant knives, axes, chisels, and edged tools of to-day are but improvements on the flint and stone implements of prehistoric times. We ride over land and sea by steam because Watt, Stephenson, Fulton, and others studied steam scientifically.

We converse over continents and under seas because Franklin risked his life to learn the pathway of lightning; because Morse, Henry, and others studied the correlation of electric and magnetic forces and the application thereof to the utilities of life. The thunderbolt is none the less in Jehovah's hand and launched at His bidding; but we can answer in part, at least, better than Job the challenge, "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?"* Thus from the sparks that fall from the Master's hand His children from age to age kindle new fires upon His altars. The first tremor of the great sea cable, though but the prelude of its power, came up clear from the ocean depths fixed by types multiplied by machinery, carried far and wide by steam. The

* Job xxxviii. 35.

whole earth heard a voice from the heavens above and the sea below, saying, "Behold the wonders God hath wrought!" By such study, by such transmission of knowledge, we plough the ground, sow the seed, cultivate the soil, harvest the crops, grind the grain to feed a multitude, in the time, and with less labor of man than was once required to feed a single family. Improved instruments of agricultural and mechanical labor may be said to have banished slavery from every country where such implements are used. The steam-engine is the obedient servant of civilization where man was heretofore the drudge. Hood's "Song of the Shirt" was but yesterday the mournful and truthful dirge of oppressed womanhood; to-day the sewing-machine, an instrument of pure scientific research, does all her work without complaint.

"A mere machine of iron and wood
That toils for Mammon's sake,
Without a brain to ponder and craze,
Or a heart to feel and break,"

Our mothers but little longer ago carded, spun, and sewed the thread of their own garments. One or two new suits a year, of eight or ten yards, was enough for work-days. A Sunday suit of the same length and breadth was a lifetime luxury, and the fashion thereof changed not. Now our wives and

daughters can hire their coarsest work done by the finest of servants; can wear a Sunday suit every day—fifty yards instead of ten is the size thereof, the form changing with some reference to the purse, but mainly according to fashion-books. Often “they toil not, neither do they spin, yet lo! Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” The better construction of prisons for the cure rather than the punishment of crime, the better construction of hospitals for the cure of disease, better sanitary regulations to prevent disease, popular writings of scientific studies, a free education—these and a thousand other blessings secured to the poor and destitute are the legitimate result of scientific inquiry and deduction, prompted also, we will hope, often at least, by a true spiritual sympathy. In thirty years four millions of machines of iron and steel have been made to do the work, and relieve flesh and blood from the toil of ill-paid labor, equal in extent to the working power of the entire race. Every puff of steam, every church-bell calling to worship, every organ pealing its notes of praise, the buzz of every spindle and wheel in factories, the blast of every forge, the clink of every hammer, are but intellectual notes of human praise added to the everlasting anthem of the heavenly hosts. The working power of steam in England in 1865 was estimated as adequate to perform the labor of

seventy-six million men, adding just that amount of productive force to the working population. Even the church-goer is benefited by a better civilization. The mellow light of stained glass, the cushioned pew, warm churches, artistic music, are all luxuries if not graces. Dives can worship in an orthodox cathedral at his own door, select his own priest without regard to the house of Aaron or the tribe of Levi, hear his own dogmas delivered *ex cathedra* as divine truths. His temple is honestly dedicated to God, with perhaps also a goodly mortgage thereon. He can say to his satisfied soul, "Soul, take now thine ease; this debt will not be required of thee." In fact, every exercise of public worship, every intelligent enjoyment of religion, every successful enterprise of benevolence, even the application of spiritual experience, is more or less profited by and dependent on the results of scientific study, which thus becomes an intelligent aid to divine service here and a reasonable ground of hope for life hereafter. The art of printing alone has been an all-important factor in limiting religious torture to the use of printer's ink.

The discovery of gunpowder put an end to feudal barbarism. Social science, though scarcely organized as a separate branch of study, exerts a beneficent influence on both church and state. It benefits formal worship by organizing institutions, suggest-

ing laws upon which the existence of order and the possibility of progress largely depend. Even the ten commandments are re-enacted and embodied in the code of civilized communities everywhere. This is done, for the most, entirely on the ground of political economy, often by men spoken of with reproach as sinners from a pulpit protected by worldly wisdom.

The same mail service which forbids and restrains the circulation of obscene literature provides for the cheap distribution of religious papers and books, so profitable to every Sunday-school and church. The minister who attempts to teach without any worldly science of worldly things is as much out of place in the pulpit as some of the teachers of the first church, whom Paul commanded to "keep silence in the church" * when they essayed to speak in unknown tongues without an interpreter. Music with only spiritual inspiration, without knowledge of the laws of sound or the harmony of notes, would be unfit praise to Jehovah, very different from that singing "with the understanding" † enjoined by the Psalmist from the "trumpet peal," timbrel, organ's solemn swell, and choral skill which is due to Him who doeth all things well, and whose everlasting anthem is attuned to the music of the spheres.

* I. Cor. xiv. 28.

† Ps. xlvii. 7.

Thus, according to David and Paul, we are to teach with the understanding, we are to “pray with the understanding,” we are to sing “with the understanding;” * and as Paul puts it in general, “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.” † What David and Paul thus declare needful we may not discard, “for none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.” ‡

If the Christian of to-day should still be inclined to think lightly of knowledge, let him reflect, as he reads the precious promises upon which he rests his hopes of eternal life, that pure science and close study by scholars without number have furnished him with that word of life. The gospels, epistles, indeed the whole Bible, were for generations, even centuries, scattered about and mixed up with well-meaning but unauthenticated and often untruthful scriptures. It was in consequence of these apocryphal writings, not then discarded, teaching absurd superstitions as to the childhood of Christ, the divine motherhood of Mary, and extreme hypostatic differences in a triune deity, that gave rise to Mohammedanism as promising a return to a pure monotheistic worship. It took more than three hundred years of study before councils had compiled manuscripts or

* I. Cor. xiv. 9-14.

† I. Cor. xiv. 20.

‡ Romans xiv. 7.

given sufficient intelligent consideration to formulate a permanent religion. It was not ignorant reading or self-satisfied inspiration that guided the early fathers, but laborious scientific research. To separate truth from error thousands of manuscripts in various languages had to be studied carefully and accurately before even a general opinion of their authenticity could be formed.

The present collection or canon of scripture we prize so highly required for its compilation a knowledge of history and sociology as well as of literature and language. How can one tell the meaning of words in a foreign, perhaps a dead, language unless he knows the life, customs, and association of circumstances to which the language was applied? It was this want of knowledge as to the colloquial signification of English words that misled the otherwise competent Frenchman to translate Milton's expression "Hail, horrors, hail!" with "*Comment vous portez-vous!*"—"How do you do, horrors?" Customs, colloquial phrases, similes, and symbols used in the Bible for teaching important truth must not be translated thus, or error and bigotry are soon defended by mistaken texts. To determine the authentic books of the Bible as we now accept it required from many scholars a careful application to Sanscrit, Syriac, Chaldee, Ethiopian, Persian, Hindoo, Arabic, Armenian, Slavonian, Samaritan, three

Egyptian Gothics, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and a multitude of minor dialects in addition to modern languages; a knowledge of which was required to adapt the Bible to common use among different people. This study was well done by the holy fathers Polycarp (martyred 169 A.D.), Tertullian, Irenæus (died about 201), Cyprian (martyred 258), Clement (died 220), Eusebius (died about 340), Gregory Nazianzen (died about 390), Gregory of Nyssa (died about 396), Cyril of Jerusalem (died about 380), Cyril of Alexandria (died about 444), Athanasius (died about 371), Chrysostom (died about 447), Hippolytus (martyred 236), Origen (died 253), Jerome (died 423), and a multitude of others. Even after the canonical books were determined by council or accepted by common consent the text was still corrupted by errors of translation, or the meaning of words translated erroneously, and it was only by studying the text word by word, or, as the Bible expresses it, by "being with former translations diligently compared and revised," that we have a Bible in almost every essential part authentic beyond question, even if not verbally inspired. Even in English, men of piety and learning from the Venerable Bede to Dean Alford have corrected and improved it by the richest treasures of their learning and study, especially as to Greek and Latin manuscript. In 727 Bede gave to England the first

instalment of English Scriptures—the Gospel of John—translated from the Latin Vulgate. For a hundred and fifty years this was the only English edition of any portion of the Scriptures. King Alfred the Great then produced a translation of the Psalms. A century later Alfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, translated the first seven books of the Old Testament. The works of Bede, Alfred, and Alfric were in the Saxon language, and were in general use until Saxon gave place to Norman-French. About three centuries later it was absorbed in the present English tongue.

In the reign of Edward I. (1250 A.D.) a fairly written copy of the Bible cost in England \$150, or about a year's wages for a laboring man, who only heard the contents by walking miles to a church, where the Bible remained, chained to the pulpit. In 1375 Wickliffe, in order to oppose more effectually the Church of Rome, translated the entire Old and New Testament from the Latin Vulgate into English. This work of Wickliffe's contributed largely toward giving stability and permanence to the English language. For nearly two centuries longer the sway of the Romish Church sealed, or nearly sealed, the sacred volume from common use. In the sixteenth century, and especially the first quarter of it, when heresy-hunting was a prominent feature of the English Church, it was regarded as

heresy to read a new or unauthorized version of the New Testament, and the offence was punished with death. In the reign of Henry VIII. this power had reached its climax, and a succession of events rapidly separated the Church of England from Rome, thus preparing the way for a general reception of the Scriptures in the vernacular tongue. Ten years previous to this, however, Tyndale, fleeing from the Continent to avoid persecution, prepared an English translation of the New Testament from the original Greek. In 1526 this was published in England. In 1530 he added the first five books of the Old Testament, and in 1535, assisted by Coverdale, produced an entire Bible. This was a great improvement on preceding efforts, and exerted a wonderful effect. Four years after a new translation appeared credited to Thomas Matthewe; this was, however, supposed to be a fictitious name, John Rogers (afterwards burned in the reign of Mary) being regarded as the real author. Cranmer's "great Bible," as it was called, appeared in 1539; in 1541 Henry VIII. issued a decree that all parish churches not already provided with a copy should procure one and should put it in a convenient place for public use.

In 1560 the Geneva Bible appeared. This was a favorite edition with the Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians; it is estimated that fifty editions appeared during the reign of Elizabeth. The Douay

version of the Bible in 1609 and 1610 is the only other version of special note that preceded the version now in use, compiled during the reign of James I. For the first time in English history, literature and learning were essential to the better understanding of Bible truth, though even the version of King James was limited by the royal command to taking the then accepted version (the Bishop's Bible) as a guide, making as few changes as possible. Under all the circumstances it was a wonderful success. Heretofore the Bible had been largely used as a palimpsest underscore of church theology and priestly power; now it was brought to the surface and spoke to every man in his own language. Like the old Septuagint version of the Alexandrian church, James' translation is stamped with the learning of the age, and gave fixity to the language in which it was written. What the Bible of Luther and Erasmus did for the German people the Bible of James did for the English. Before this, the church at large had no Bible as a single work of reference and authority; they were dependent, as the Jews before them had been, on manuscript and traditions, and thus were in imminent danger of falling into the same pit of destruction through the traditions of men. But the sifting process, commenced more than three hundred years ago, has passed down from hand to hand, from council to council, from version to ver-

sion, from seminary to seminary, from scholar to scholar, until the last shroud of mediæval ignorance and bigotry has been thrown off, and we have a free gospel of truth instead of a gospel of oppression and falsehood. The science of printing early took up the collected canon, gave it as a new inspiration, a living guide, to each individual soul in the language of living men. Steam, another gift of science, multiplied the copies, giving new security against new interpolations. The study of language has translated the accepted version in almost every spoken tongue. Machinery has printed, bound, and distributed it, until the people of almost every nation may read the word of life in their own tongue, in their own home, and at their own price. In 61 years 34 million copies of the Bible, and portions of it, have been distributed by the American Bible Society. In 71 years 82 million copies have been distributed by the British and Foreign Bible Society, printed in 240 languages and dialects. Other societies have distributed 43 million copies. The Bible that cost \$150 in the reign of Edward can now be had for 25 cents; a New Testament for 5 cents; and if any are too poor for that, a copy may be had for the asking.

Notwithstanding all changes and improvements in the text, it is not uncommon to hear the English Bible quoted and insisted upon for dogma and doc-

trine as if it had been delivered to man *verbatim et literatim* in modern English language. Thus we see that ignorance, superstition, and self-interest had corrupted the Scriptures in spite of spiritual devotion. Scientific study restored the text to its original authority and usefulness. Let us honor science, then, as the rescuer of our spiritual treasures rather than ignorance, the enslaver thereof. It will be the fault of this and succeeding generations if the seed thus gathered fails to be again sown to vegetate and cover the earth with new verdure. Ignorance and superstition, dogmas enforced as radical truths, make wider the gate and broader the way that leads to death. In a similar manner self-righteous spirituality and egotistic experiences, enforced as rules for the working of the Holy Spirit, narrow the gate, obstruct the way that leads to life everlasting. The individual letters of the alphabet in which the Bible is printed, the power of letters to combine and form words, forming words into sentences, to convey thoughts of men and truths of God, are all strictly achievements of science. Thus in the Christian religion, above all others, a sacred scripture, a sacred literature, and a righteous life should be inseparably connected, notwithstanding the folly of friends, the enmity of enemies. Amid all the varied standards of taste, for nearly three hundred years the English

Bible has maintained its place, as Spenser so aptly expressed it, "a well of English undefiled."

Amid the advances of literature and language the English Bible has maintained its excellence. Amid all the changes of temporal rule it has maintained its influence; driven from one nation, it has taken root in another, and developed until it has returned to reign ascendant and resume its heritage; banished from the pulpit by intolerance, it found refuge in the heart of the people until it burst forth into new life and universal acceptance. If we would have the Bible maintain its supremacy with advancing civilization, we must teach men the "thus saith the Lord" and not the Shibboleth of Gilead.*

When the lawyer asked Christ what he should do to inherit eternal life, he said to him, "Love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."† The climax was complete only when Christ added intelligent service. We are not to worship God in any image coarser than the intelligence. He breathed upon man when He made him a little lower than the angels. Nothing short of this will rescue heathen lands from the bondage of ignorance and superstition. Three hundred and fifty millions, including the Romish Church and every sect of those gener-

* Judges xii. 6. {

† Luke x. 27.

ally called Christians, as first named at Antioch, is the entire force of those professing faith in Christ, after four thousand years of preparation under the Old Testament dispensation and nearly two thousand years more of teaching under the New. Of the other populations of the world, an approximate estimate computes 160 million as Mohammedans, 500 million as Buddhists, 120 million as Brahmins, 200 million as heathen of varied type. The followers of Mohammed, now numbering nearly 200 million, have prospered on the graves of the apostolic churches for nearly one thousand years. The Christian churches which seemed most firmly planted by the early fathers in Asia and Africa, with head-quarters at Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, sickened and weakened under sectarian disputation and theological culture, until they became easy victims to the power of Mohammed and willing converts to the faith of the false prophet of Mecca.

The weakness of the Christian church was the strength of Mohammedanism. All that was strong, all that led to enthusiasm and success, all that touched the heart and roused the better nature of the miserable Arabs, leading them to hope for better things, was the great central truth in the creed of Islam, "There is but one God." While Christians were quarrelling and dividing on the triune personalities of the great "*I am.*" the fallen and de-

graded children of Ishmael grew and spread, until a shattered and aimless race were welded into a vast empire. Like Moses, Mohammed led forth a beggared race under the banner of one God—led them from the Pacific to the Atlantic. In a single century the Koran became law and gospel where for six hundred years the church had been established. The strength of Mohammedanism was monotheism; its weakness, what may lead to its future dissolution, what is now draining its life-blood, is embraced in the second great doctrine, "Mohammed is His prophet." Modifications of this latter idea taint almost every creed of Christendom. "There is but one God" led Islam like Israel to glory and to empire. The scimitar of Allah and Mohammed, like the sword of the Lord and Israel, was a resistless power; but when the power becomes debased to mere human conquest, and the religion grows subservient to individual pride and passion, Islam like Israel must perish in her turn. In view of these facts, the question, Shall the Christian church of the present day thus fail or retrograde? becomes one of startling moment. Estimating the population of the earth at one billion, Max Müller gives the following estimate of the various religions: *

* "Chips from a German Workshop," vol. i. p. 23.

	Per Cent.
Buddhists	31.2
Brahmins.....	13.4
Mohammedans.....	15.7
Heathen.....	8.7
Christians.....	30.7
Jews.....	.3
	<hr/> 100.00

Of the Christian percentage estimated, about 20 per cent belong to the Greek and Romish churches. These, stanch orthodoxy anathematizes as the scarlet woman of Babylon, "mother of harlots."

Will the small remaining percentage of Protestants, sectarians, as progressing for nearly two thousand years, be able to convert the 80 per cent of heresy and heathenism to unity in God? Of the ten or twelve hundred million of humanity daily floating down the river of time, it is estimated that about thirty-two million a year, or sixty a minute, sink beneath its waters. According to prevalent orthodoxy some eight per cent of these twenty-six million, forty-eight a minute, will annually go down to death without a saving faith, and the other six million a year, or twelve a minute, go beneath the dark river of time contending as to the ground of their better faith. (There are not less than fifty different faiths represented in the United States.)

The decline and death of any religion is preceded by conflict within its own borders. Even the Chris-

tian religion, whenever and wheresoever it has once obtained a footing and afterwards retreated, has done so because of internal factions rather than external foes. If religion lives and does its work, it must avail itself of existing circumstances, co-operate in all things lawful with existing governments, existing laws, and existing progress in science. Religion must not scoff at the community or government which protects it, or sneer at the science which elevates it and crowns it. Knowledge and wisdom must continue to enlighten a nation, and statesmanship to guide its government. Let religion do this, and the day is not far distant when the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth and all the people honor Him.

Religion alone has grown up, prospered, and passed away. Science alone has in like manner been swept away in the conflict of forces which have destroyed empires and nations in all time, that a better flesh and blood may inherit the earth. The harmonious union and religion of spiritual and intellectual development will, as a rule, sustain the trials which test the strength of nations. False creeds in religion must perish, false theories in science must pass away, but the *eternal* truths of religion and science must remain forever. The Pyramids, the Sphinx, images and temples that once were glowing utterances of a living faith, are now the silent

memorials of the forgotten dead. Yet on the banks of the Nile those ruins have remained, the silent oracles of a long since extinct religion. The screw of Archimedes, a scientific pump based on a law of dynamics, still raises the waters of the sacred river for tillage, twenty centuries after the religion of Archimedes and the Pharaohs is no more. But as each nation was gathered into the harvest of the Lord, a seed-corn of truth was saved and planted again among men, to bloom in new beauty and bear better fruit, until the gospel that once crept along the banks of rivers and by the shore of seas will by compass, chronometer, and steam cross every ocean, bear fruit in every land for the healing of the nations.

A religion suited to all men and all ages must be based upon a central element of unchanging truth, sacred from all mere human inquisitions. The approaches to this central truth may be different, may be obstructed by a narrow theology or made easy by intelligent study. In this connection we may profit by the history of all past religions. We find mere theologies which in one generation were maintained as vital principles and bitterly defended were in the next regarded as unimportant or discarded as false and dangerous. Over and above all these conflicts, over and above these wrecks of effete dogmas and sectarian doctrines, the great central truths

of the Bible have become more prominent, better developed, more permanent, fundamental truths, established as the body of religion, while creeds, confessions, conditions of forms, and modes of service are regarded as outer and changing garments. Does not this warrant a reasonable hope that the day is drawing near when wrangling of churches, and denunciation of men for conscience' sake, will cease, and the cheerful chimes of "peace on earth and good-will toward men" will swell the ceaseless praise and worship of God for all coming time? Ignorance will undoubtedly linger long in the lap of humanity, vice will flourish in dark places, religion without understanding will be proscriptive, understanding without religion continue wicked. But ignorance will pass away, wickedness will work out its own punishment, and the words of the waiting Jew, near the willow-fringed rivers of Babylon, twenty-five centuries ago, will still stand good: "As for truth, it endureth and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth forever more." *

" In the world's broad field of battle,
In the soul's last search for life,
Be not like dumb driven cattle
Be a hero in the strife."

* Esdras iv. 38

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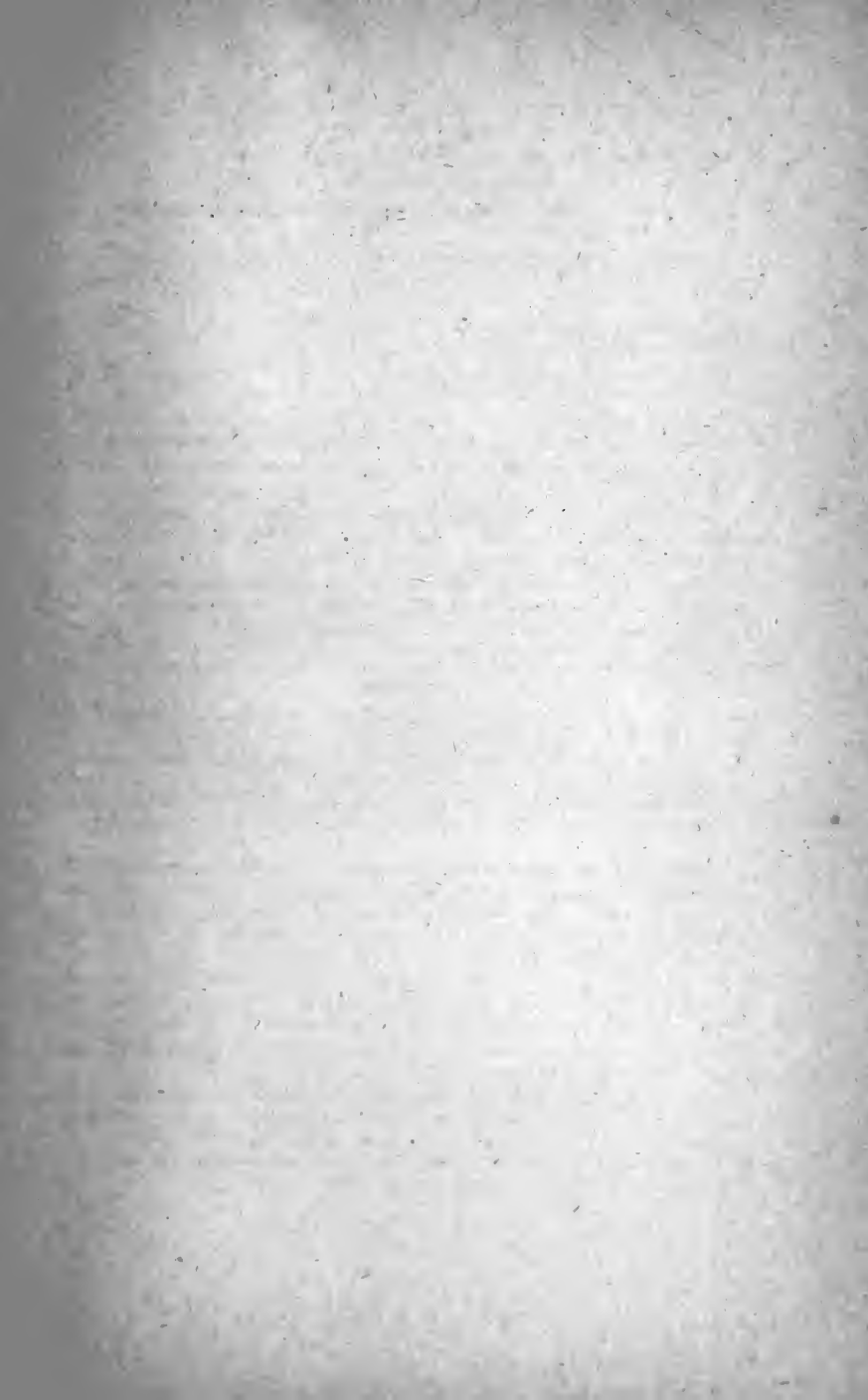
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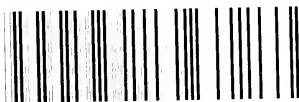


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